The Ambassador of God and Pope Pius IX.

by Roselly De Lorgues

Work enriched with a portrait of Christopher Columbus

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AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

In my capacity as a Catholic, I declare that I submit entirely to the doctrine of the Church, to the rules and decisions of the Holy See, in particular to the decrees of the Sovereign Pontiffs Urban VIII and Benedict XVI, concerning the canonization of Saints.

If it happens to me, in the subject of the present Cause of Beatification, to use the words "Saint" and "Holiness", it is only in a purely relative manner, due to insufficiency of language, lack of terms which more fully express my thoughts. In advance I disavow the rigorous and absolute meaning that one would like to attribute to these expressions: because no one can be called SAINT until the Church has officially qualified him as such.

Done in Rome, June 26, 1874.

Count ROSELLY DE LORGUES

Member of the Roman Academy of the Catholic Religion

LETTER

Of

HIS ILLUSTRIOUS AND REVEREND EMINENCE

Monsignor LE CARDINAL DONNET

ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX, PRIMATE of AQUITAINE

to

M. LE COUNT ROSELLY DE LORGUES

Bordeaux, October 12, 1874.

Mr Count,

I have not lost sight of the Cause of Christophe Colmb for a single moment. While our Country was going through trials which had such a painful impact in Rome, we were commanded to remain silent. But today that there has been a little calm, I believe I can urge you, Mr. Count, to take up again this pen with which you have retraced the life of the hero of your heart. Let's enjoy the time: "Dum tempus habemus operemur bonum." You will only have to point out the Christian virtues of Christopher Columbus, and his titles to the veneration of the faithful, as well as to their recognition.

The sympathies you encountered in Rome should encourage you in this work. Do not worry much about the opposition raised by a few respectable scruples who hold themselves in defiance against any new idea. Why be surprised if people who have never read the true story of your hero do not want to find in him everything that constitutes true Holiness? You must not forget that without the interruption of the Council, the Postulation for the Introduction of the Cause would have collected the signatures of the greatest number of members of the Assembly. You had proof of this before leaving the Eternal City.

Show again what the role of Christopher Columbus actually was. Highlight even more the heroism and constancy of his virtues, the character of predestination and the signs of Holiness which mark all the great acts of his life. List the wonders that God worked through this man of faith and courage. After being a historian, be a hagiographer. Identify from the midst of his multiple existence as sailor, administrator, governor and viceroy, the divine favors which signaled the course of his apostolate.

Having contributed myself in the first years of the reign of Louis-Philippe to the erection of the bishoprics of Guadeloupe, Martinique and Réunion, which formed part of my metropolitan jurisdiction, I believed I could carry the introduction of the Cause of Christopher Columbus, by exceptional means, before the Sacred Congregation of Rites, of which I have the honor to be a part, no less with a view to the glorification of this Christian hero, than with a view to all the advantages which would result from it for the Church.

I proposed the exceptional path, because it is the only way to succeed, because the Cause, like that of Joan of Arc and Louis XVI, has an essentially exceptional character, since it is a vocation exceptional, of an exceptional work, of an exceptional destiny and of an equally exceptional result. In your memory to the Council, you, Mr. Count, very clearly resolved the difficulty relating to the only Bishop of the place who can begin the first information. It seems, in fact, that this Cause, distinguishing itself from many others, must be the sole responsibility of the Holy See.

As for the objections arising from the long time that has passed and from the silence that has been kept for more than three centuries about this admirable man, I find them without force against the authority of the facts, against the testimonies of contemporaries, and the authentic documents in your possession. When it comes to an eternal work, we don't stop counting the years. A thousand years are as one day before the Lord. If the ministry of Columbus had been sufficiently known during his lifetime, if from his funeral he had been regarded as a Saint, if it would not have been necessary to rescue him from the darkness of oblivion and error, his Cause would obviously be easier, but on the other hand, less extraordinary and less in line with the exceptional character of its mission and its untold consequences.

So, good luck, go forward.

Should we only succeed in obtaining a declaration of Venerability, I would still advise you to continue the proceedings. This result alone would be of immense significance. This declaration would have the direct consequence of recognizing the providential role of Christopher Columbus, and of implicitly affirming the glorious participation that the Papacy had in his enterprise. It would be the consecration of a historical fact little known by some, disfigured by others, left in the shadows by all until the Pontificate of Venerable Pius IX. It is in the interest of truth and the law of history that the character of the servant of God be rescued from oblivion. The proclamation of his heroic virtues would be of great edification for the people and a new glory for the Church.

I also share the opinion of the learned Archbishop of Genoa, Monseigneur Charvaz, who told you with emotion: "As soon as Columbus is declared Venerable, most certainly some families of our sailors will begin to invoke him;

and I have no doubt that sufficient miracles would then occur regularly to proceed with his canonization."

Moreover, you already have in your hands recent proof of the effectiveness of his intercession. Other facts will be added to the one that you did not want to publicize yet. Don't waste time, Mr. Count. Let's enjoy the days. Activate your pen. My confidence in success has not weakened. How can we not hope for the introduction of this great Cause, when it is so well designed to add its splendor to that of the immortal Pontificate of Pius IX? It seems that a mysterious connection links the fame of the Catholic hero to his reign. All generous souls feel the desire to see the first Pope who crossed the Ocean and approached the continent discovered by Columbus, award him the reward for his faith. Formerly the pilgrims from America, who came to Rome to venerate the tombs of the Apostles, showed in an expressive passage of their address to the Holy Father, that his journey to the New World was not forgotten there.

Soon therefore, Mr. Count, thanks to your persevering zeal, and to the conviction that your numerous writings breathe, so rightly appreciated by our Pius IX, Christopher Columbus will appear to the eyes of our generation as one of the marvelous figures of history, and one of the most extraordinary instruments that God has held among the treasures of his Providence, to intervene in the things of this world.

Accept, Mr. Count, the new assurance of my tender and unalterable devotion.

† FERDINAND, Cardinal DONNET,

Archbishop of Bordeaux.

PROLÉGOMÈNES

PROLEGOMENA

Chosen by God as a greyhound to humanity the whole of earthly creation, Christopher Columbus received as a reward for his heroic labors nothing but slander, irons, outrages, misery and oblivion. Hoping to prevent public indignation and hide the appearance of this ingratitude, the Court of Spain, after having defamed the man to whom it owed its splendor, silenced his tomb, and endeavored to abolish his memory. We will reveal, later, the sordid motives by which the ancestor of Charles V and the successors of this monarch conspired, traditionally, against the benefactor of their nation.

This Court machination succeeded, in fact, in deceiving public opinion about the true author of the Discovery. The work of Christopher Columbus was attributed to the Florentine, Amerigo Vespucci; and unfortunately France, unintentionally, first contributed the name America to the continent that the Revealer of the Globe had anticipated. But while the alleged genius of America was everywhere advocated in Europe, and in Florence the house where he was born, had become the object of patriotic respect, was adorned with an inscription engraved in gold in the marble, attributing to him the discovery of the New World; while Genoa itself, duped by these assertions, and too forgetful of its own glory, exalted that of Amerigo. The metropolis of Catholicism resisted the general influence of opinion. Rome did not initially give the name America to the regions discovered by the envoy of Providence. Imposing on the new continent the name of the cause for which it was divined, sought and found, logically she called it **LAND OF THE HOLY CROSS**[1]**.**

If, by superior order, faithful to the order of silence, the Castilian poets kept silent about Christopher Columbus, the Roman poets did not fail to honor his glory. Alone, in Europe, the Roman purple seemed to blush at the general ingratitude, and to try to repair it. The Eminent Cardinals: Ascanio Sforza, Bernardin Carvajal, Bembo, Luiz of Aragon, Alexander Farnese, Benedict Pamphili, Pallavicino, Augustin Valerio, Gabriel Paleotto were the patrons of the poets who celebrated the Messenger of the Good News. The Sacred College,

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[1] In the famous edition of Ptolemy's Geography, made in Rome by Evangelista Tosino, the new continent was named: ***The Holy Land of the Cross or the New World***

almost entirely, invited the noble Giulio Cesare Stella to write in verse the work of the Discovery.

While already no one in Spain remembered Columbus, Rome solemnized his greatness. And through the admiration of the Eternal City the ambassador of Genoa learned there that the AMBASSADOR OF GOD to unknown nations had been his compatriot. Informed of the purpose of his work, knowing his virtues, his trials, his life as a prophet, apostle and martyr, Uberto Foglieta did not fear to print, before the eyes of the Pope, this bold and precise affirmation, that "never in the Christian Church no one was comparable to him in merit." His conscience rose, his pious indignation fulminated at the sight of the carelessness of the Genoese, who, so often lavish with statues for vulgar causes, had not yet erected a stone to this Hero, eternal honor of Liguria . This patriotic call for justice from his fellow citizens had no echo outside Rome, and remained without effect. Unnecessarily the book entitled *Clarorum Ligurum elogia* (praise of the Ligurians) obtained a prolonged impact; the Doge was deaf. The Serene Republic did not deign to vote for any monument, statue or inscription to that of its child which eclipses all splendor.

Then, the course of time, the events that occurred, the new concerns left, in Italy as elsewhere, dormant for almost three hundred years the memory of Christopher Columbus.

However, here and there, at long intervals, a voice arose pronouncing the name of the great navigator; admiring the results of his work, without suspecting the providential character that distinguishes them. Under Napoleon Ist, strange assertions of the Piedmontese Galeani Napione, gave birth to Christopher Columbus at the castle of Cuccaro, in Monferrato, idle discussions arose in Turin, Florence, Genoa and Savona on this fantasy , which was supported by a vain luxury of local erudition.

After the fall of the Empire, from the first days of the Restoration, these debates began again with as much activity as bitterness. Letters, notes, pamphlets, protests were published. We printed, we insulted, we pamphleted, in all formats and at all prices, our protestations; and we only managed to misunderstand and diminish the greatness of the one whose glory we claimed. The religious public witnessed, completely indifferently, these academic controversies and these parochial pretensions. The clergy still did not know what Christopher Columbus'

mission had been, as well as the goal of his first aspirations and the final end of his efforts.

During these passionate errors, these fruitless discussions, the name of the AMBASSADOR OF GOD could not be read anywhere in the cities of the New World. From Labrador Land to Cape Horn, one would have looked in vain for a monument, a statue, or even a simple inscription to his glory. However, this guilty indifference of the Americans was less annoying and less contrary to the truth than the false erudition of certain Italian academicians. The writings of Napione, Cancellieri, Priocca, Father Spotorno, Felice Isnardi, Belloro, blindly followed by Angelo Sanguinetti, etc., multiplied in Liguria slanderous imputations against the Servant of God. The compatriots of Christopher Columbus became his most stubborn defamers, while claiming to enhance by their grandeur that of Genoa, his cradle.

While this chorus of depreciations was still resounding, the first affirmation of the providential role of the Apostle of the Word appeared in our book: THE CROSS IN THE TWO WORLDS, The translations and reprints of this work, the imitations, the plagiarisms of which it was the object contributed to promptly popularizing in Europe and America the evangelical character of Christopher Columbus. “Indeed,” said Baron Van Brocken, “from the publication of this work, we have never stopped paying attention to Christopher Columbus. The facts establish it, and the dates prove it peremptorily.

"In 1844, LA CROIX DANS LES DEUX MONDES (THE CROSS IN THE TWO WORLDS) was published in Paris. A real rush greeted its appearance. The book was immediately reproduced in Brussels. It was transported in a foreign language. It was taken care of in America. It was successively translated in Naples and Milan. King Charles Albert, who already knew the writings of the same author, looked through his new production with interest. After this reading, full of admiration and respect for the memory of Christopher Columbus, astonished at the carelessness of the Genoese, the generous monarch resolved to order an allocation to erect a monument to this Christian hero in his native town."[2]

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[2] Van Brocken, The Posthumous Vicissitudes of Christopher Columbus, p. H and 12; in-8. Leipzig, 1865

II

A few years later, sat on the Chair of Saint Peter the first Pope who had crossed the Atlantic, traveled the southern regions of the new Continent, contemplated the great Ocean, approached the waves frozen by the Antarctic pole, and crossed into its length the largest space of the seas. It seems that, through this personal experience of men, climates and productions of the New World, Christ had prepared his future Vicar for a more complete understanding of the divine work, and for a deeper knowledge of humanity than he was to govern one day, in the midst of moving dangers and inextricable complications.

Also, barely recovered from the revolutionary agitations, Pius IX, shortly after his return from Gaeta, ordered that the story of the Christian navigator to whom we owe America, until now exclusively told by Protestant pens, be told finally written in its integrity by a Catholic, and presented in its true aspect.

As the Eldest Daughter of the Church had misled opinion, and given the name of a plagiarist to the Continent discovered by the Envoy of God, it was herself that the Head of the Church charged with repairing, as much as possible, this injustice, by publishing in his language the life of this sublime apostle. The Holy Father chose, for this work, the oldest French Catholic writer. He did not entrust it to a priestly chisel, because this biography is not purely historical or religious, but it includes very diverse assessments, touches on multiple interests, and concerns the entire world, without regard for beliefs. and governments.

His Holiness did not limit himself to encouraging us verbally. When we returned to France, he deigned to send us a Latin letter, for the same purpose.[3]

Later, our work being well advanced, we returned to Rome; and we were obliged to admit, to the shame of the Catholic bookstore of Paris, that, despite the protection of the Pontifical Brief, no so-called religious publisher wanted to undertake our publication. Then, by one of those generous spontaneities which are characteristic of his noble nature, Pius IX deigned to show us the means of making the work appear in the best conditions.

Suddenly, the echoes from the Vatican seemed to have awakened the interest that the high dignitaries of the Eternal City once took in the fame of Christopher

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[3] Brief of December 10, 1851.

Columbus. The Sacred College, the Ambassadors, the Princes, the Auditors of the Rota, the Generals of the religious Orders, the principal members of the Prelature expressed unanimous sympathy for this publication. His announcement was like an event in Roman society. A former Minister of Justice and Religious Affairs, long-time President of the Chamber of Deputies, the illustrious Mr. Sauzet, witness to this impression, transmitted it to His Em. the Cardinal-Archbishop of Lyon.

Although the literary perfection of this pen improvisation, drawn at the very moment of our departure, deserved all the honors of publicity, we have until now humbly enjoyed it alone, selfishly. But this letter, of which we obtained a copy, is in relation to the question too precious and too important a certificate for modesty to have the right to retain it any longer in our archives, especially at a time when routine and ignorance gangs closely together against the servant of God.

Here is the entire text of this missive:

Rome, February 3, 1854.

My lord,

This letter will be delivered to Your Eminence by Count Roselly de Lorgues. I do not pretend to recommend to such an enlightened Pontiff, the author of *Christ Before the Century*, and of so many other writings, dear to the Faith and honored by letters; I only wanted to facilitate the honor of your personal knowledge. Your Eminence already knows as well as I, the courageous initiative taken by Mr. Roselly de Lorgues in difficult days, and the services rendered to religion and primary education, whose inseparable future hangs over the destinies of our stormy times as the supreme hope of salvation.

Count Roselly de Lorgues will culminate his honorable work by glorifying with a magnificent work one of the greatest names of modern times, that of the Revealer of the New World. It would seem that this great figure needs to be revealed in turn, and that the jealous destiny which pursued his noble life has persisted in projecting its shadow even on his grave. His memory was almost abandoned to Protestant writers,

who disfigured his life. Little is known that holiness equaled his genius. And the one who since the Apostles has most propagated the name of Christ, still lacks a Catholic historian. It was necessary to restore the glory of faith to him who gave a world to his empire.

Mr. de Lorgues has undertaken this noble task, and he is worthy of completing it. Universal eagerness cannot be lacking in such a work, because it is important to the honor of the Two Worlds; it has also excited in the Catholic metropolis of both the most lively and august solicitude.

Mr. de Lorgues takes with him the most flattering testimonies of the benevolent assistance with which the Holy Father and the Sacred College hastened to honor in advance a monument which will itself honor our era. Italy, which gave birth to Columbus, Spain, which gave him glory, could not fail in its history. France, which took such a large part in the noble fruits of its discovery, cannot stay behind. And it is up to the illustrious Primate of Gaul to give him the signal, by consecrating with his pious approval, the brilliance of so many illustrious votes.

I congratulate the author in advance for the support that such high benevolence will undoubtedly give him. I congratulate myself on it; and I also dare to congratulate Your Eminence, asking you to allow me to take this opportunity to renew the homage of the deepest veneration and respectful devotion with which I have the honor to be

Monsignor,

From your Eminence,

Your most humble and most obedient servant,
P. Sauzet

The protection granted by the immortal Pius IX to the long-forgotten memory of Christopher Columbus seemed to have suddenly revived it in the Two Worlds.

A few weeks later, while in America inscriptions, colossal statues and monuments were going up in his honor, Genoa celebrated the inauguration of the railway which now connects the City of Marble to the capital of Piedmont; and the venerable Metropolitan of Liguria, Mgr Andrea Charvaz, in front of the open-air altar where he had just celebrated mass, in the presence of the royal family, surrounded by a crowd flocking from all parts of the Sardinian States, solemnly proclaimed the Christian virtues of the Genoese hero. Two days later, we ourselves had the honor of explaining to the King the providential mission of Christopher Columbus and his evangelical role. Victor-Emmanuel II, after having addressed to us, with noble curiosity, the most unexpected questions, very graciously urged us to press on with the publication of our work.

On the 11th of the following month, France, through the generous example of S.A.R. Mgr the Duke of Montpensier, reminded Spain of its duties towards its benefactor Christopher Columbus. The admirable Queen Marie-Amélie, the Infanta Doua Maria Luiza Fernanda and Mgr the Duke of Montpensier arrived as if on a pilgrimage, to Rabida, this rustic monastery where the man of Providence had found his first asylum, his best friend and the surer means of undertaking its discovery. From then on, the munificence of the Prince saved from complete destruction this residence of piety which sheltered the genius, and served to confirm him in his apostolic project.

Little by little, public attention became more and more concerned with Christopher Columbus every day.

III

To respond to the august confidence of the head of the Church, the life of Christopher Columbus was written with religious care; all the facts being drawn from authentic sources, taken from original documents, presented sincerely in their integrity, following their natural sequence. The writer constantly effaced himself in this work; and the historian has never replaced history. For eighteen years this work, reproduced in various languages, has been scrutinized by European criticism. It provoked acrimonious attacks, earning its author impotent

ridicule, without any of his assertions being able to be shaken. The Protestants of London, Edinburgh, Germany, Switzerland, the United States, the unbelievers of Italy and Belgium, the Freemasons, the deniers of the supernatural found nothing to oppose him except sarcasm and jokes. Generally the French press was pleased to recognize the importance of its refutations, its clarifications and its historical adjustments.

This work merited the suffrage of the first French ecclesiastic who had a presentiment of the Holiness of Christopher Columbus; and later S. G. Mgr Dubreil, Archbishop of Avignon, was kind enough to write to us:

. . . . . "I reread, with even more interest than the first time, these beautiful pages where we find the life of Columbus, so true, so striking because you were able to understand that nothing should be more like the way in which produce great events, than that of telling them; and that to tell them worthily to posterity, one must draw one's inspiration from the very source from which they came.

“It was the Christian spirit which gave wings to the genius of Columbus, which pushed him to his marvelous discoveries; it is the same breath that guided your pen and made you write your book which is also a discovery. You have descended into this soul or rather you have risen to it; and the first you were able to see what the historians your predecessors had ignored: that the superiority of Columbus, that the secret of his greatness is his faith. The first you showed that it was because he was religious even more than his time, because he was an enthusiastic Christian that he became a sublime navigator, that he was a great man because he was a Saint. . . . . “

Despite our reluctance to talk to our readers about what is personal to us, a higher interest obliges us to do so today; and we will not hesitate to recall here the opinion of the press on this historical restitution, in order to firmly maintain the character of authority which belongs to it. It is important to clearly establish in the eyes of all, to what degree of consideration she has risen in public esteem. We owe it all the more, as our work contains the first elements of the Cause of Beatification which will be discussed; this is why very recently it has been the object of reckless attacks, on the part of writers who do not admit the supernatural.

Here then, in extracts, is the literary judgment rendered on our history of Christopher Columbus.

First, the official organ of the French Government, then the *Moniteur Universel*, devoted two large articles to the analysis of our work and ended it with these lines:

"Besides, the only historical point which seemed questionable to us in the midst of these documents so positive and so numerous, of these researches so new and so decisive, which will be worth to Mr. de Lorgues, before posterity, because this book is made for her, the title of restorer of a great memory is the very light, very lively question of the etymology of Vera-Crux (True-Cross)....

"It took all the smallness of the question, all the training of a preconceived idea, to throw the author into this oblivion, the only one perhaps of a voluminous work, so rich in facts and things, of which the impact has already been so great both abroad and in France, and where so many capital questions, hitherto poorly understood, misjudged or even completely ignored, have been discussed and resolved with the most masterful and decisive authority."[4]

Le Pays, journal of the Empire, reported the considerable action of this production, which introduced Providence into history, and established it there with the help of official documents and authentic documents.[5] Mr. Barbey d'Aurevilly, guessing the scope of this work, said:

"It is a capital work of effort, AND EVEN OF RESULTS."

The *Constitutionnel*, although not liking divine intervention in human things, nevertheless did justice to the author's science, and formally announced the success of his work.[6]

The *Moniteur de la Flatte* made this declaration: "We will not hesitate to recognize that the new history of Christopher Columbus has its marked place on board any European ship. Strange thing! this eminent biography had not yet

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[4] Moniteur Universel, September 2, 1856

[5] Le Pays, November 12, 1856

[6] Le Constitutionnel, September 7, 1856

been written until now by a single European, or Catholic, writer... We do not share all the convictions of Mr. Roselly de Lorgues; but independently of the eminently literary merit of his work, of his insights as new as they are original, of the "elevation of his historical philosophy and the difficulties overcome, we cannot fail to recognize his high special value in the order of ideas most familiar to our readers. His name remains attached with honor to a lasting monument."[7]

Later, we read in the *Correspondence of Rome*:

".... Much has been made of this book in Italy, where the religious mission of the great Genoese is so well rendered; and Count Dandolo is busy translating it in Milan. We also know that this book was very well received by the Catholics of the United States, and the religious newspapers gave the most flattering accounts of it. Mr. de Lorgues, already a knight of the order of Saint-Sylvestre, has just been elevated by the Holy Father to the dignity of commander."

“At the same time,” said Baron Van Brocken, “His Holiness honored the author of a personal letter. Her Majesty the Queen of Spain had her Secretary of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Don Calderon, write to Count Roselly de Lorgues. Collantès, a letter of thanks and congratulations, which was followed by the cross of commander of the distinguished order of Charles III.

"Then the Emperor of Austria, the King of Bavaria, the King of Naples gave Count Roselly de Lorgues particular testimonies of esteem and benevolence.

"Several European governments had his work placed in public libraries. In France, S. Excellency the Minister of State subscribed to it for the Crown libraries, and S. Excellency the Minister of the Navy subscribed to it for port libraries."[8]

We are not going to list in this place the translations and reprints of this story, as well as the praises with which it has been honored by high people, wishing to stick simply to the votes of literature. And if we have recalled, here, the feeling of the secular press about our work, it is that we had to establish peremptorily, by their own testimonies, that that of our pen has deserved the right to be accepted.

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[7] Le Moniteur de la Flotte , December 25, 1856

[8] Van Brocken, in the place cited, p. 23 and 24

While the ignorant writers of Mazzinism, the Garibaldian folliculars insulted us shamelessly, the Court of Italy, which we will assuredly not suspect of bigotry, did not hesitate to recognize our loyalty as historians. Here is the proof.

PRIVATE OFFICE
OF
HIS MAJESTY.

Turin, March 5, 1857.

"Mr. Count,

“Christopher Columbus was a glory of our country and of the whole world. His life, so full of various vicissitudes, is a sublime study for both the politician and the philosopher. We must be very grateful, especially in Italy, to the learned historian who brings it to the attention of the entire public, retracing it with keen interest and frank truth.

“The King, my august Sovereign, appreciated all the merit of your work, Mr. Count, and to give you salient testimony, he deigned to confer on you the decoration of Officer of his Order of the SS. Maurice and Lazarus. I immediately wrote to H. E. M. the first secretary of the Grande Maîtrise who has just sent me your diploma; and I hasten to send it to you, seizing this happy circumstance to offer you my congratulations, as well as the assurances of my distinguished feelings.

The Minister of the King's Household,

NIGRA.

Mr. Count Roselly de Lorgues, man of letters, officer of the Order of the SS. Maurice and Lazarus.

Genoa

The consequences of this publication show how penetrating the intuition of the Sovereign Pontiff was, when he ordered the life of Christopher Columbus to be written in full and brought to light.

From this work, not only do ideas useful to history, the navy, and universal biography arise, but new documents which irrefutably prove:

1° The participation of the Church in the enterprise of discovery;

2° The intervention of Providence in human affairs; by establishing through official acts, protocols, authentic documents, several indubitable facts of a supernatural order; which, however, cannot be attributed to fortuitous causes, to blind chance, and which defy any explanation from the followers of positivism;

3° Divine inspiration never ceasing to advise the decisions of the Holy See, even in the saddest days of its history;

4° The practical usefulness and liberalism of religious Orders;

5° The relations of the Papacy with Christopher Columbus, its spontaneous Legate in the New World.

Furthermore, this biographical exhibition resulted in a completely unexpected effect. The character of the messenger of the Gospel was revealed in its greatness. We saw the prodigy, the miracle mingling with his life, ostensibly supporting his work. We recognized in him all the Christian virtues taken to the heroic level. Reading his story, we felt this admiration of the soul, these interior comforts which emerge from the lives of the saints; we experienced edification, breathed beatitude; it was judged by the intimate sense of piety that the man chosen by God to carry the cross in the New World was among the blessed, and that he should shine in the splendor of the elect: in *splendoribus sanctorum* (the splendor of the saints).

From there, a beginning of interior worship among many Christians.

IV

While this feeling of veneration for the incomparable disciple of Christ was spreading, the head of the Church also felt the need to pay tribute to his zeal and piety. The moment was solemn. For the first time, for three hundred and seventy years, the Papacy was going to break the silence it had kept on this envoy of God. It seems that the Holy See was waiting for the public error to be dispelled and opinion to be corrected, so as not to surprise it too much by prematurely doing justice to the Christian whom the world had misunderstood until our days.

If, by an easy to understand reservation, we have kept this august attestation for more than ten years for ourselves alone; today the interests of Catholicism require our humility to no longer keep it secret. Its publicity becomes necessary; and without hesitation, we will know how to sacrifice our taste and our habits to the fulfillment of a religious duty.

TESTIMONY GIVEN
TO EVANGELICAL ZEAL

OF

CHRISTOPHER COLOMBUS

BY

HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS IX

Extract from the Brief addressed on April 25, 1863 to Count Roselly de Lorgues.

Pius PP. IX.

“Dear Son, greetings and apostolic blessing. Called by the will of God to the government of the universal Church, despite our insufficiency; desiring in our role as Apostle to increase the greatness of this same Church, we assiduously take care to provide with a range of honors these men who are no less distinguished by the brilliance and seniority of their race, than by their zeal for good works and the defense of religion. Certainly you must be counted among these elite men, dear Son, and therefore, as a testimony to our benevolence, we consider you worthy of a very great title of honor. Because we have learned from authentic documents that you came from an ancient and noble Italian family who, brought to France by the vicissitudes of the times, produced there men remarkable for piety, wisdom, integrity, skill in the conduct of business.[9] You have added your virtue and your merits to this praise of your ancestors. Indeed, gifted with talent and imbued with the best principles, animated by an excellent spirit and an excellent doctrine, you did not use it for the vain glory of fame, but to opportunely defend the cause of religion and confuse by your writings the audacity of the impious fiercely against the Catholic faith; you have applied all your means to

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[9] In addition to those of his Italian ancestors who once served the Holy See, and whose devotion and fidelity the Sovereign Pontiff deigned to recall, in a Brief dated July 3, 1866, the historian of Christopher Columbus counts, in the French branch of the family, several distinguished magistrates; notably: - a rational Master at the Court of Auditors of Provence, - an Assessor of the city of Aix, first Advisor in the seneschal, and author of the first book printed in this city, - a President at mortar at parliament of Ail, which Francis I entrusted with important missions, - an Avucat general, - a Councilor of State, - and a Chancellor of France. (See for details: the Universal Nobility of France, t. IX. The Directory of the Nobility, t. XX and XXVI, the Present State of the FRENCH Nobility, etc., etc.

help human society, which cannot sustain itself without religion. In order to bring to light other works commendable through piety and erudition, you have spared neither care nor vigilance, so that you have no less acquired the reputation of a scholar than that of a man having highly well-deserved of religion.

"Among your works there is one which turns as much to the honor of religion as to the luster of Italy: it is the very rich history written by you of the life and acts of Christopher Columbus

WHO, IGNITED WITH ZEAL FOR THE CATHOLIC FAITH, RESOLVED, BY UNDERTAKING THE MOST BOLD NAVIGATION, TO DISCOVER A NEW WORLD, NOT POINTED TO ADD NEW LANDS TO THE SOVEREIGNTY of Spain, but in order to place new PEOPLES UNDER THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST, WHICH MEANS of the Church."

. . . . . .

(The rest of the Brief being entirely personal to us, we limit our quotation to these lines.)

Thus, here is the evangelical ardor of Christopher Columbus, his apostolate, the true goal of his life explicitly declared by the Vicar of Christ. This august observation of the efforts of the servant of God summarizes and completes the idea that, henceforth, the Church must have of its character.

In 1493, the head of Christendom recognized Christopher Columbus "very worthy, commendable in many capacities and made for so great a work." At that time, the Pope simply described him as a providential man.

In 1863, the head of the Church appreciated his intimate feelings, the goal of his work, his evangelical role. The Sovereign Pontiff affirms that it was not for any earthly interest, but solely for the expansion of the Faith, that he conceived this astonishing enterprise and faced its dangers. Here the Pope describes the man as apostolic.

V

However, by a natural propensity, the idea of the holiness of Columbus became in the hearts of the faithful a persuasion as sweet as it was strengthening. Two

years later, as often around us the wish was expressed to see this hero of the Gospel given his just reward, we went to Rome to find out if His Holiness would consider it possible to submit the request for his Beatification.

At the same time, our illustrious friend, Count Tullio Dandolo, arrived in the Eternal City, who revised and enriched the Italian translation of our history with two admirable prefaces. After our mutual congratulations on this meeting, we told him the reason for our trip, and urged him to accompany us to His Holiness, who more than once had spoken to us about him with paternal kindness. We therefore had the satisfaction of going together to pay our respects at the feet of the august protector of the fame of Columbus.

The Sovereign Pontiff first showed us what difficulties this introduction would present, because of the impossibility of conforming to the rules established in this matter. However, the Holy Father told us that nothing prevented us from making the request, and added in Latin: *Tentare non nocet*. At the end of a rather diverse conversation on other subjects, His Holiness, returning to the subject of this audience, told us again at the end: "Nevertheless, we can try"; and he repeated these words: *tentare non noce*t.

A few days later, a newspaper was created in France in the Italian interest, under the auspices of the imperial insulter, Prince Napoleon Jerome, to combat the Papacy, destroy temporal power and uproot Catholicism from our soil, *Opinion Nationale* enhanced its first Paris with the following lines:

"We are preparing, in the city of Rome, to carry out a new beatification; and the man to be canonized is... Christopher Columbus!

"We protest, with all our strength, against this encroachment of the court of Rome. Are there not enough Benoît Labre and Marie Alacoque in the world, enough visionaries and ecstatics, enough martyrs of China and Japan, to satisfy the devout needs of ultramontanes?...

"It is a historian of Christopher Columbus, Count Roselly de Lorgues, who, it is said, assisted by Mr. Tullio Dandolo, made the first steps with the Pope[10] . . ."

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[10] L'Opinion Nationale, June 6, 1865

The press promptly spread the news of this beatification project throughout Europe. It was greeted with almost general assent. But certain democratic newspapers in Italy having ridiculously distorted this audience, our friend, who on returning home had transcribed the interview word for word, did not think it necessary to limit himself to a newspaper rectification; he inserted this faithful writing into a volume which he then had printed in Assisi, and which appeared under this title: *Christian Art*[11]. Count Dandolo felt how important it was to note the smallest details of a fact which could become a page of the *Ecclesiastical Annals* of the 19th century.

VI

During this time, among the faithful a pious predisposition happily adopted the idea that the man, chosen to double the space of the Earth, was a true saint. Some also noted that Pius IX being the first Pope who crossed the Ocean and visited the New World, he seemed naturally destined to crown the Christian through whom the Gospel took possession of it.

These hopes of piety, these thrills of Catholic opinion, at the thought of finally glorifying this great servant of God, soon inspired a noble resolution in a Prince of the Church. The Primate of Aquitaine, H. Em. the Cardinal Archbishop of Bordeaux, who in his metropolitan jurisdiction includes the bishoprics of the Antilles, wrote to the Sovereign Pontiff, begging him to kindly authorize the introduction of this Cause before the Sacred Congregation of Rites .

No less remarkable for the beauty of the form than for the breadth of the views, the letter from the eminent Cardinal attested to the disposition of minds, their pious expectation; recalled the heroic virtues of the messenger of the Gospel, and solidly motivated the reasons for admitting his Cause.
Although this letter, subsequently released to print, was never made public, the emotion it excited among the faithful was like electric. Copies were made and translated into various languages. The newspapers reproduced fragments of it. All of European society was concerned about it. The press addressed thanks to its illustrious author, who could not suffice to respond to the congratulations coming from the first secular notabilities. The majority of the French Episcopate supported the approach of the venerable Cardinal. Several bishops gave their

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[11] Tullio Dandolo, l'Arte Cristiana, from pages 20 to 26.

formal support to His Eminence's letter. Ecclesiastics from various dioceses added their voices to those of the first pastors. First of all, with a single glance, the famous bishop of Orléans understood the profound consequences of this proposal. He congratulated Cardinal Donnet on his initiative. With the spontaneity which is characteristic of superior souls, Mgr Dupanloup admirably clarified, with the flow of the pen, the great aspect of this Cause, and its Catholic interest.

Let us quote just a few words from the illustrious Prelate:

"We must not," he said, "let impiety distort great events, and misrepresent the great men who belong to the Church. The unexpected present of the New World to the Old World is the most astonishing event of history. And it is for the conquest of souls, by an inspiration of faith, with the encouragement of the Church, and of her alone, that the admirable Genoese undertook, pursued and accomplished his discovery. Yes, it would be very beautiful if this New World, so populated, so active, so proud, called to such surprising destinies, had a Saint as its first ancestor. It would be very beautiful if the navigators of all the seas had as their model and patron a Saint. And it is already very beautiful that a Prince of the Church affirms this conviction, claims this glory and proposes this Cause."

While in Italy, most bishops applauded the letter from the Primate of Aquitaine, the importance of the initiative taken by France had not escaped the attention of the Iberian Peninsula. Without distinction of nuance, the entire Spanish press supported this Beatification project. H. Em. Cardinal Fernand de la Puente, Archbishop of Burgos, transmitted to his venerable colleague from Bordeaux patriotic congratulations on behalf of the episcopate of Spain; and added his personal support to the request for Beatification. In America, this idea was accepted with marked favor by the press of various States. In Brazil, she inspired a poet. On both continents, several Protestant countries showed their frank sympathy for the cause of Christopher Columbus. In Russia itself, at the seat of Orthodox deceit, the idea of such a Beatification produced a sensation which the accredited papers echoed. Here are the words in which an organ of Russian opinion, which is printed in French in Brussels, appreciated the approach of the eminent Cardinal Donnet:

“It is one of the happiest ideas to come from the mind of a man accustomed to the vast and impartial conceptions of a universal Church. The misfortunes and injustices that the shadow of Christopher Columbus trails

after it, like a funeral shroud, do not weigh with a weight considerably increased over the years on all of humanity? The moment, then, had it not come to pay to this pure and unblemished glory the homage which had been deserved by so many fruitful services and which should never have cost anyone tears? Was it not time to clear the universal conscience of this heavy accusation?...

"Whatever religious opinion one may belong to, is it possible not to applaud with both hands the glorification of Christopher Columbus, wherever it comes from? Is it possible not to not welcome with the favor of which it is worthy, this beautiful enterprise of a Prince of the Church, striving to associate the Papacy with the reparation of an immense injustice, and to raise in the hearts of one hundred and thirty- five million Catholics of today, not counting future generations, a monument less perishable than those of granite or bronze to the one who brought the two continents together '?"

Let us reflect on these lines from a newspaper hostile to our faith. They carry their teaching. Would we find in the past such a community of opinion, such a movement of interest among men regarding a Christian? Do we know of a cause for Beatification whose announcement has aroused such unanimity of feelings, notwithstanding the diversity of beliefs?

VII

Several bishops having then meditated on the life of Christopher Columbus, wrote directly to His Holiness.

From the West Indian Sea and the Indian Ocean, requests were sent to Rome. Following the example of the illustrious Archbishop of Mexico, Mgr de La Bastida y Davalos, in America as in Asia several heads of dioceses, without having yet written their request, wholeheartedly adhered to that of the eminent Cardinal Donnet. The generals of the religious Orders seconded these pious hopes with their wishes.

The following year, one of the most learned and renowned prelates of Italy, Mgr Andrea Charvaz, Archbishop of Genoa, addressed to the Sovereign Pontiff a letter which we have the duty to reproduce here:

“MOST HOLY FATHER.

Knowing that a Prince of the Church and some of my colleagues in the Episcopate have already expressed to Your Holiness the desire to see before the Congregation of Rites the cause of the beatification of the pious and illustrious Christopher Columbus, to whom the old world owes the glory of the discovery of the new; in my capacity as archbishop of the diocese which gave birth to this great and faithful servant of God, I myself come very humbly, but with happiness and confidence, to express the same wish to you, either in my own name or in that of the clergy and faithful of my diocese.

"When one reads the history of the famous Genoese navigator, written, under the auspices and by order of Your Holiness, by the pious and learned Count Roselly de Lorgues, one cannot help but recognize in him a divine election, a providential mission, a motive, an eminently high and holy goal; the practice of Christian virtues carried to the point of heroism; and in his discovery of the New World, which doubled the field where evangelical workers work, a fruitful work for the extension of the reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ.“

“The private and public life of Christopher Columbus presents such a combination of the marvelous and the supernatural, shines such characteristics of holiness, that admiration for the great man changes into veneration for the true disciple of the Gospel and the son devoted to the Church.

“From the year 1854, before the publication of the history of Christopher Columbus, in a speech delivered in Genoa on a solemn occasion, in the presence of the King, surrounded by his august family, his court, his ministers and an immense crowd of people, I already signaled with glory and happiness the holiness of the providential and evangelical mission of this Christian hero.

“I do not, however, hide from myself, Most Holy Father, the difficulties which present the introduction of the cause of Christopher Columbus (who was successively encouraged and blessed by three Popes, and of which Your Holiness has already yourself, in a Brief, praised the evangelical heart, the tireless zeal and the providential character), because of the need to conform to the rules laid down by Pope Benedict XIV; but Christopher Columbus having spent his entire life on the seas, his great work being exceptional, the Papacy itself having, in its time, treated him exceptionally, I implore Your Holiness to be

willing to use your sovereign authority to introduce this cause by way of exception.

"It would be, Most Holy Father, an additional glory for Your Holiness, a happiness for the faithful of this diocese, and for all sailors, to whom She would thus give a glorious patron and an admirable model which they still lack, and of which they feel the need, if one day we could publicly invoke as Blessed this great navigator, this heroic Christian, whom we rightly regard as one of the most majestic personalities in the history of the world and as the first Apostle of America.

"Full of this sweet hope, I pray Your Holiness to accept the homage of the deep veneration and the perfect devotion with which I have the honor to be,

"MOST HOLY FATHER,

Your most humble, most devoted servant and obedient son,

†André, Archbishop of Genoa

The convocation of the Ecumenical Council in Rome seemed to offer, to the representatives of the Church, a favorable opportunity to bestow a mark of gratitude on this heroic Christian.

After having asked the main questions which were to occupy the venerable assembly, the author of these lines addressed a Memoir to the Fathers of the Council, to recall the rights of Christopher Columbus to a solemn testimony of gratitude. On the advice of a large number of archbishops, bishops and consultors, a Postulation was drawn up, which implored the head of the Church to be willing to defer to the wishes of the faithful; and using his apostolic sovereignty, order the introduction of this Cause by exceptional means.

A certain number of bishops having left Rome immediately after their vote on Infallibility, it was agreed that, as soon as the session resumed, the Postulation would be publicly proposed "for the signature of the Fathers of the Council. Several of them were to make a motion relating to the Cause of Christopher Columbus. We give, further, the entire text of the Postulation, which already bore the signature of cardinals, primates, archbishops, bishops and vicars apostolic

from different regions of the globe, when the punishment of France and the sacrilegious invasion of Rome, by obstructing the meeting of the Ecumenical Assembly, have postponed this question, the expediency of which was so generally recognized.

VIII

We do not want to silence it: these generous dispositions of some of the Fathers of the Council greatly displease a prelate who has never read the life of Christopher Columbus, and, however, cannot bear to hear him named. From the first day our project was mentioned, he only laughed pityingly and shrugged his shoulders. When he knew that the Postulation was passing from hand to hand, he moved heaven and earth against us, especially the earth, and excited the ranks of routine minds.

On the other hand, some considerable secularists supported the Cause of Columbus. On May 19, 1870, a senator from the Kingdom of Italy, the Marquis Tancrede de Riso, upon receiving the blessing of Pius IX for himself and his entire family, said to His Holiness: "I cannot withdraw, O Most- Holy Father! without adding my prayer to that which Count Roselly de Lorgnes and our Dandoio, of happy memory, addressed to you for the introduction of the Cause of the great servant of God, Christopher Columbus." The more the testimonies in favor of Christopher Columbus multiplied, the more material men, the bureaucrats affiliated with our adversary, redoubled their efforts and accentuated their opposition. They moved around the Vatican and monitored its surroundings, to keep the Postulator of the Cause away.

Let us turn our eyes away from the very personal interest they have in ensuring that nothing is removed from ordinary formalities. We prefer to believe that legitimate reasons excite their zeal; that respect for custom alone guides them; that they think they must, in good conscience, reject an innovation which would open the door to abuses, against which the Church has been protected by the rules so admirably established in this matter by the venerable Pontiffs Urban VIII and Benedict XIV.

Singular thing, among these opponents there is not one who dared to formulate and sign his objections against the introduction of this Exceptional Cause. None of them has ever read the story of the great servant of God, written by order of the head of the Church. No one deigned to inquire about his life. They stick to anonymous pamphlets, small abridgements, most of them taken from the Protestant Washington Irving; and they do not fear to establish themselves as judges of him who, after Moses, John the Precursor and Saint Peter, received the most vast mandate from heaven. Thanks to their prevention, vague suspicions and erroneous ideas have infiltrated important people in the Eternal City. From this results, with regard to Columbus, an almost inevitable indifference, and Rome is today perhaps the city in Europe where the Revelator of the Globe is least known. We can say of him what Pope Clement XIV said of the learned Cardinal Gerdil, still reserved in petto: "Notas Orbi, vix notus Urbi."

The main author of this opposition only knows one thing about Columbus, and that is that he discovered America, which seems quite simple to him, America being for him only a word of four syllables: that laughed at me. The immensity of this double continent, its cosmographic destination, its influence on the balance of our planet, the variety of its productions, the prodigious results of this increase in our heritage, this sudden extension of human knowledge do not exist at its eyes. He doesn't suspect it, and, moreover, he doesn't care. What does the greatness of the work, the providential mission, matter to him! As soon as the Cause does not present itself in the ordinary form, with a complete file, listed, initialed, stamped with an episcopal seal, it becomes indignant, it becomes agitated, rises very high and descends very low, to prevent it to occur. In his eyes, what is this Christopher Columbus? - A sailor. — Now, have we ever, at the Congregation of Rites, concerned ourselves with the sea? What does this new claim mean? Sometimes, from anger he passes to a merciful compassion towards these ignorant people who speak of Exceptionality, and hope to see ascend to the congregation of the Rites, other than by the common staircase, the hero whose zeal opened the Gospel to the other half of the Globe. What ! for so little, we dare to speak of an Exception! But it's madness, as his French accomplice says.

They now believe they have triumphed, because by spreading the rumor that it displeased the Pope that Christopher Columbus was being taken care of, they are casting doubt in some minds and are thinking of diverting a fairly large number of signatures from the Postulation. They don't see, alas! that it is to the

detriment of the Holy See that their success would turn. Because, while they would thus deprive the history of Pius IX of a magnificent page, they would leave the Pontificate facing an accusation all the more serious because in appearance it seems well-founded, and would therefore sadden the hearts of the faithful, as much as it cheerfully delights the Voltairians, the Protestants, the positivists, opponents of Catholicism. But let’s move on; we will return to this subject soon.

In their stubbornness, which they nevertheless believe serves Pius IX and the Church, these contradictors are the inconsistent enemies of the Church and of Pius IX. Without doubt, their righteousness of intention will not divert them, we hope, from the narrow path to heaven. But the evil they do, mistaking it for good, should not find us complacent towards their short-sightedness. They do not understand that after the Redemption of man, there was no event more considerable than that which doubled the space of the Earth. Applauding themselves for their prudence, and making an idol of their own wisdom, these men become like her. They neither see nor hear, although they have large eyes and do not lack ears.

They don't see.

They do not see that since the beginning of the reign of Pius IX, each civilized people has taken care of Christopher Columbus in turn; that by studying him closely, his virtues excite admiration much more than his discoveries; that his moral greatness surpasses his genius; and that this greatness is the glorification of Catholicism.

Christopher Columbus was truly God's Messenger to unknown nations. He gave humanity the New World; in the New World, the Gospel; and to the Gospel, access to all the lands which border the seas.

Through him, the New World received from the Old the evangelical light, the principles of justice and law; knowledge of the history, sciences and arts of Europe. But this continent, hitherto ignored, was to give us infinitely more than we gave it in the material order.

Constantly, Columbus' discovery contributes to nourishing our intelligence and even our body. It now insures us against the scourge that was once the most

frequent and the most feared: famine. It puts new foods, starches, precious starchy foods within our reach: sweet potato, potato, cassava flour, cassava flour, maple sugar, corn, tapioca, cocoa, vanilla , pineapple, guava, sapodilla, mandubin, ground pistachio, coconuts, breadfruit, wheat, from India, to which are added the flesh and oil of an incalculable multitude of fish, whales, manatees, hawksbills, schools of cod; the remains of the herds of bison and wild cattle prodigiously multiplied in the prairies of the West, the pampas of the South and the endless plains.

The new Continent supplies our needs and our luxury with immense quantities of cotton, skins, furs, textile plants, shells, scales, down and plumages as varied as they are splendid. He also provides us with effective remedies for the most ordinary ailments. We owe to him the febrifuges, the sudorifics, the tonics, the evacuants, the repairers, the most energetic antidotes: cinchona, chloroform, bismuth, coca, guaiac, ipecacuanha, cousso, eucalyptus, sarsaparilla, Para watercress, sassafras, guarana, julep, anise, paratodos, craveiro da terra, the best turpentine, gums, resins, various balsams, besides that of Peru formerly so common , etc. America enriches our agriculture, gives our fields, our gardens, our public walks nourishing plants, perennial trees which serve to beautify the landscape as well as to clean up homes. It even sends us the means to warm and fertilize, through guano, our old soil which is depleting.

However great they may be, these advantages nevertheless form only simple accessories of Discovery. Conceived by the mind, accomplished by faith, the work of Christopher Columbus benefits intelligence in a much different way than material interests. It has broadened human understanding, revealed to us unknown wonders, shown the great aspects of nature, rivers of a majesty still unknown, forests of dizzying extent, limitless plains, revealed the eternal forces of creative power. **The new Continent has allowed us to conceive the exact shape of our planet and measure its surface area.** He helped us to know the Ocean, to note its best routes; to perfect hydrography and shipbuilding, to develop the study of astronomy and to draw up the general map of our sky. We owe to him the application of steam, the electric telegraph, submarine cables, serious progress in geology, philology, natural history and medicine. A single volume would not be sufficient to contain the direct enumeration of the results and secondary consequences of Christopher Columbus' discovery.

To these men who do not know how to see, let us recall a demonstrative fact, the meaning of which they do not want to grasp.

IX

When the illustrious gentleman of the Roman States, who was one day to be called Pius IX, after having measured the longest part of the Atlantic, was, by necessity of sea, obliged to cross with difficulty in its width the immense expanse of South America to go to Chile, the name of Christopher Columbus could not be read anywhere in the New World. Only a small republic has recently decorated its youth with it. But from the day when this holy priest, elevated to the gaze of Christianity, ascended the Chair of Peter, it seemed that a mysterious link must have existed between the first explorer of the Ocean and the first Pope who had crossed its boundaries. spaces.

Since then, noble sympathies have continued to be drawn from various points of the Globe to its Revealer. Far from fading over time, this admiration of people spreads from year to year. Columbus becomes the object of benevolent and universal concern. We cannot draw up here the endless list of works of history, art and literature inspired by his name. It will be enough for us to cite dates to show that the manifestations of enthusiasm and veneration were no longer interrupted. However dry this nomenclature may seem at first, its entirety contains such an expressive meaning that we cannot spare readers from it without prejudice.

Notice carefully:

Cardinal Jean-Marie, Counts Mastaï-Ferrelti, Archbishop of Imola, elected Pope on June 16, 1846, took the name of Pius IX. And the same year, poems, dissertations, biographies, and historical documents were published in honor of Christopher Columbus.

1846. — Lorenzo Costa publishes his poem, Christopher Columbus. — The knight Luigi Grillo, former chaplain of the Sardinian navy, prints the history of the illustrious Ligurians. — Abbot Gavotti writes his notice on Columbus. — Vincenzo de Conti resumes the discussion on the homeland of this hero. — Constantin Reta publishes in Turin his history of the immortal Genoese.

1847. — The French composer, Félicien David, creates his oceanic melodies on the discovery of Christopher Columbus.

1848. — The Franciscan scholar Maria Fannia da Rignano, now bishop of Potenza and Alarsico, publishes in Rome her remarks on a poem in honor of Christopher Columbus.

1849. — This year, sterilized by the revolution, passes painfully through the commotions of all Europe. But the inventor of the New World is no longer forgotten there.

1850. — Peru, having voted for a colossal statue of Christopher Columbus, commissioned the excellent Genoese sculptor Salvatore Revelli to execute it.

1851. — Pius IX deigns to order us to write the complete history of Christopher Columbus. — Our venerable friend the Marquis Antonio Brignole Sales, former ambassador of Sardinia, commissions the Genoese sculptor Raggi to create a group representing Columbus at the time of his discovery. — An eminent Ligurian, Mgr Stefano Rossi, publishes in Rome a monograph on the imprisonment and transportation of Christopher Columbus.

1852. — A collective poem, due to students at the University of New York, is published under this title: America Discovered. — The excellent friend, for whom our hearts always mourn, Count Tullio Dandolo, publishes his work in Milan: The Ages of Dante and Columbus.

1853. — Lamartine writes the biography of Columbus. — Mgr Luigi Colombo, of the Counts of Cuccaro, prints in Rome a volume entitled: Homeland and biography of the great Admiral. — Don Ramon Campoamor publishes a poem entitled: Columbus. — A senior naval officer, Baron de Bonnefoux, prints his History of Christopher Columbus. — Finally, for the first time, the Revealer of the Globe encounters in France an inspiration worthy of his greatness. Father Louis-Anne Dubreil, since then justly elevated to the honors of the archiepiscopate, and today seated on the famous see of Avignon, brings forth from his heart a sublime warmth, with harmonies full of majesty. Lyricism overflows there, and rises in a sovereign momentum to raptures and heights that will not be surpassed. This ode, entitled Columbus in Irons, erases everything that at various times and in

different languages has been tried on this noble argument, the eternal temptation of poetry.

1854. — The learned Archbishop of Genoa, Mgr Andrea Charvaz, publicly praises Christopher Columbus, in an admirable speech which the Municipal Council votes to print. — Queen Marie-Amélie, Her Royal Highness the Infanta Doua Maria Luiza Fernanda and the Duke of Montpensier, are going on a pilgrimage to the ruins of the convent which sheltered Christopher Columbus on his arrival in Spain.

1855. — In America, the praise of Christopher Columbus is renewed several times, regarding the inauguration of monuments or statues. — In France, Baron Feuillet de Conches brings to light a scholarly work on the portraits of Christopher Columbus. — The illustrious Father Ventura de Raulica addresses his manifesto to the Italians: Christopher Columbus restored to the Church.

1856. — The first complete history of this Christian hero, written by Order of the Sovereign Pontiff, is published in Paris. — His Royal Highness Mgr the Duke of Montclair becomes the Patron of the Spanish poets whose zeal he awakened, and the Album de la Rabida, in honor of Columbus, appears in Seville under his noble auspices. — The learned professor M. Gaultier de Claubry publishes a monograph on Christopher Columbus. — In London, Captain Alexandre Rcher writes about this hero.

1857. — Printings and reprints of translations of our work in Milan and Cadiz. — Violent attacks by Protestants in Germany, Geneva, London, Edinburgh and Dublin. — Libelle launched against us, in Italy, by Abbot Sanguinetti, obstinately slanderer of the Genoese hero. — The young Milanese poet, Contini, publishes an ode in honor of Columbus.

1858. — Tributes paid to Christopher Columbus by Catholic newspapers. — The most famous magazine in Italy, La Civiltà Cattolica, defends us against our detractors and honors our work with its vote.

1859. — The Italian War absorbs public attention. But, since the peace of Villafranca, we talk again about Christopher Columbus.

1860. — Robert Smith publishes his poem: Columbus and the New World in London — In Turin, Professor Jean-Baptiste Torre composes his Popular History of Christopher Columbus.

1861. — The Franciscan Father Agostino d'Osimo releases his volume from the presses of Ascoli: Christopher Columbus and Father Juan Perez de Marchena. — In Plaisance, a new work appears without author's name: Historical research on the true homeland of the famous Christopher Columbus.

1862. — At the Collège de France, Mr. Philarète Chasles summarizes the heroic works of Christopher Columbus and the writings which dealt with them. — Citizen Emile Deschanel crudely attacks our pen in his lectures, and creates a volume against the greatness of Columbus.

1863. — In Rome, an excellent writer, Father Marcellino da Civezza, in his General History of the Franciscan Missions, devotes many pages to celebrating Christopher Columbus.
— In Paris, Mr. Georges Seigneur publishes, in beautiful verses, a remarkable trilogy on the inventor of the New World.

1864. — In Chile, Mr. de Varnhagen, Minister of Brazil, prints a dissertation on the precise location of Columbus' first landing. — In Madrid, on June 22, a law passed by the Cortes opens a credit of 800,000 reals to erect a statue to Christopher Columbus.

1865. — In Paris, Mr. Lucien de Rosny gives a new translation of the first letter from Christopher Columbus. — The Marquis du Belloy draws from our work a History of Columbus, illustrated with beautiful engravings. — In his remarkable drama, entitled: Don Juan Converted, Mr. Désiré Laverdant sketches in vigorous strokes the holy character of Christopher Columbus.

1866. — The admirable letter from the Primate of Aquitaine, His Em. Cardinal Donnet, Archbishop of Bordeaux, begging the Holy Father to introduce the Cause of Christopher Columbus by exceptional means, acquires the importance of an event . It is printed in two languages in Bordeaux and Marseille, and reproduced in part in the Religious Weeks of several dioceses, while it is translated abroad. — The entire European press is buzzing with this question; and Protestants themselves admit that the

beatification of Columbus would be a great act of ecclesiastical justice. — Almost simultaneously, the first of the speakers, the glory of the French bar, the illustrious Berryer, and one of our greatest Catholic writers, Mr. Poujoulat, congratulate and thank the venerable cardinal for this approach. — The noble initiative of the eminent archbishop is accompanied by coincidences which have the appearance of results. Indeed: in that same year, 1866, the scholar Mr. Jérôme d'Adda reproduced in Milan, in magnificent types, for the Ambrosian library, the Lettera rarissima of Christopher Columbus.

— In France, at the Sorbonne, Professor Himly established that the discovery of the New World could not have been the result of chance. — One of the most generous defenders of Catholicism, our late Count Henri de Riancey, in the ninth volume of his great History of the World, applauds the idea of this beatification. — In Spain, the University of Salamanca dedicates an album of poetry to Christopher Columbus, composed in his honor by the most renowned of its former students. — In the United States, Mr. Barlow takes care of the proposed beatification and royally prints a splendid volume.
— Mr. Henri Harrisse publishes in New York, under the name of Bibiotheca americana vetustissima, his curious collection of early writings on America. — In Brazil, Mr. Manuel Aranjo of Porto-Alegre dedicates to the Emperor Pedro II his great poem on Christopher Columbus, whom he declares the chosen one of Providence. — In Bogota, the Congress of States of Colombia decides that the statue of Christopher Columbus will be erected in the Isthmus of Panama. — Is not the appropriateness of the letter addressed to the Holy Father by the illustrious Cardinal Donnet obvious to both worlds?

1867. — In Paris, Mr. Gustave Pradelle printed a beautiful drama in seven acts about Christopher Columbus. — New editions of the life of Columbus, abridgements, plagiarisms, counterfeits of our history are being undertaken in various countries.

1868. — Mr. Richardt Henry Major publishes in London the Collection of Letters from Christopher Columbus. — Mr. Bord d'Hauterive, in his Monarch of Wisdom, commemorates the Catholic zeal of Christopher Columbus.

1869. — In three churches in Paris, edifying readings from the life of Christopher Columbus are given in the evening. — The name of the Revealer of the globe is

finally known in Japan, through our history of the Discovery, taken from Europe. — In Genoa, Commander Bruzzo requests that the Italian government demand from the Spanish government the restitution of the ashes of Christopher Columbus, which belong to his homeland. — Mr. Abbé Cadoret, canon of Saint-Denis, former deputy chief chaplain of the navy, wrote with great literary talent an abridged history of Christopher Columbus, which achieved the most flattering success.

1870. — A terrible poem, in the Genoese idiom, appears under the title of Colombiade. — A Life of Christopher Columbus, Discoverer of America, by Arthur Helps is published in London. — A professor from the University of Genoa, Mr. Knight Gazzino, composes a beautiful ode on the holiness of Columbus. — We are reprinting, in England, the Choice of the letters of Christopher Columbus by R. H. Major.

1871. — A new Life of Christopher Columbus is translated in Florence. — A newspaper is founded in Savona under the name of Christopher Columbus. — In Modena, Mr. Bernard Pallastrelli, in a luxury folio, deals with the marriage of Christopher Columbus. — De Ferrari strangely takes Christopher Columbus as the subject of his poetry.

1872. — The view of parish libraries owes to the pen of an eminent archbishop considerations of the highest order on Christopher Columbus. — The American bibliophile, Mr. Henri Harrisse, publishes a volume in Seville on the second son of Columbus. — Abbot Poggi prints poems in Turin in honor of Columbus.

1873. — The year opens with an Italian poem of which this hero is the argument. — Mr. d'Avezac adds an appendix to his Chronological Canvas of the life of Christopher Columbus. — An excellent History of Christopher Columbus for the use of young people, work of the learned doctor of letters, Dominique Bertolotti, rector of the seminary of Saint-Charles in Arona, comes from the presses of Turin. — Professor Jacques-Marie Ruffino publishes dazzling poetry in honor of Columbus and Franciscan hospitality. — In Genoa, the knight Don Luigi Grillo speaks, openly, of the holiness of the greatest of Italians, and celebrates his heroic virtues in the Giornale degli Studiosi. — In Paris, during Advent, the church of Sainte-Marie des Batignolles hears a eulogy of Columbus, equivalent to a panegyric.

Thus, without any interruption, from the moment Pius IX was enthroned until the moment we draw these lines, publications in various languages have continued to attest to the interest inspired by the providential personality of Christopher Columbus. On the continent discovered by his faith, his name awakens everywhere today a feeling of gratitude. The former indifference of municipalities for its glory has changed into solemn demonstrations.

Buenos Ayres has named its most beautiful monument and its new promenade, Alameda de Colon, after Columbus. A little further west, Spaniards, originally from Biscay, founded an already prosperous colony under this revered name. Not long ago, emigrants built a town near the borders of Patagonia which bears the name of Columbus. By erecting with pious intention the statue of Columbus in the center of the town of Cardenas, Senora Gornez de Avellaneda transformed it into a flourishing city. This rapid increase is truly a miracle. In the republics of Ecuador, Venezuela, New Granada, Guatemala, Bolivia, Uruguay, the name of Christopher Columbus, formerly unknown, is found everywhere in honor. His glory invaded even the political capital of the United States. In Washington, the bronze doors of the Capitol retrace the main events of his life. — In Philadelphia, a monumental statue will be erected by subscription, the inauguration of which will take place on the next anniversary of the independence of the Union. Among all the American States, the country where a minister of Jesus Christ stayed, who became His Vicar under the name of Pius IX, stands out above all for its admiration of Columbus. And Chile, as if it now linked its destiny to the memory of the Catholic Hero, made his image the official sign of its relations with the nations; he marks his postage stamps with it. We don't want to multiply the details; but could we cite a second example of such a unanimous and universal concern?

Who is the great man, who is even the great Saint whose memory moves the hearts of people to such an extent, after more than three centuries? This involuntary cult, this veneration that time consecrates and propagates instead of carrying it away, is it not an exception in the history of humanity?
Could the enemy prelate of Columbus, the active organizer of the current league against the messenger of the Gospel, point to another servant of God who was the object of a similar memory and a similar solicitude?

X

We said that these opponents do not see. Let us add that they do not hear any more.

They do not hear the concert of gratitude given to the memory of Columbus by all civilized peoples. Nor do they hear the blame they bring to the Papacy; the accusations they raise against the Church. Their ignorant disdain for the most admired of men irritates the depths of human conscience. Buried in the sweet tranquility of their routine, they believe themselves to be acquitted towards the Holy See, towards the truth, towards the interests of the Church when, to free themselves from the obligation to study this Cause, they have proudly, high of their inadequacy, replied: "It is too late."

"It's too late !" This word from Nero does not fit the mouth of a Christian; it is also the word of this July Revolution, origin of the troubles which Europe, for forty years, has continued to feel. "It's too late!" Beware of the effects of this sinister word: “It is too late!” What do you know about it, Monseigneur? Who authorizes you to say it? You who ignore the life of this incomparable disciple of Jesus Christ! you who know neither his actions, nor his feelings, nor his virtues, nor his miracles; you who do not know how to discern the opportunity of the times, the providential coincidences and the general interests of Catholicism; you who have not been able to understand the grandeur of this Cause, its august character, the splendor that it would add to the pontificate of Pius IX, how dare you respond: “He is too late!” Distrust this cruel word , fear that the world will apply it to you in turn. And when, under the pressure of universal feeling, this Cause will have been, despite you, finally introduced by this exceptional path which belongs to it; keep in mind that men, no longer knowing that justice is so slow to come, maintain their accusation of ingratitude, and do not respond to your example: “It is too late.”

The bureaucrats and their bosses who, with a clear conscience, work in the shadows to remove this Cause, do not understand its greatness any more than its opportunity. They do not see that far from arriving "too late", she would have been ill-advised to show herself earlier, that she presents herself at the chosen moment, the only one at which she could and should appear. The Cause of the great Christian, whose faith has won us a world, is evoked by the universal opinion of Catholics, in the hour full of fear and anxieties when a spirit of error

passes like the breath of death over Europe, creating darkness, leading the people astray with their pastors, striving to obscure the notions of justice and truth in souls, to tear the dearest beliefs from our hearts, to oppose maternal authority of the Church individual reason and unreason; to the fixity of the doctrine, the vacillation of systems leading to the despair of negation.

When the teachings of the Savior are disdainfully rejected, and when we treat as old things decrepit every principle of order, respect, stability, is it not appropriate to solemnize the man of Faith, who by it alone triumphing over purely human wisdom, accomplished the most immense work of this Globe, the most fruitful for the extension of Catholicism?

When the spoliation of the Holy See carefully prepared, then suddenly consummated during the disasters of France, powerless today to punish this outrage, leaves Catholic governments impassive, is it not appropriate to glorify the unfailing attachment of the Hero who loved the Papacy with unparalleled dilection, and gave a unique example of it in history?

It is precisely in the midst of this overflow of iniquity against the Church and ingratitude towards its leader that it would be beautiful to see the Sovereign Pontiff, although dethroned, stripped, destitute and taking refuge near the tomb of the Apostle , profess to the nations a high lesson of justice and gratitude, by crowning with the nimbus of Saints that of the servants of God who was the greatest benefactor of humanity.

XI

A high dignitary of the Church, whose archiepiscopal seat alone illustrates today the ancient city where the Popes once resided, S. G. Mgr Dubreil, inspired by the tutelary spirit and the luminous foresight which guided the hosts of the famous palace of Avignon, did us the honor of writing to us on the opportunity of this Cause of lines imbued with the grandeur of such a subject. The adversaries of Christopher Columbus, these unconscious enemies of the glory of Pius IX, will do well to meditate on them."

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"I know that, together with the eminent Archbishop of Bordeaux and some members of the episcopate, you have conceived the noble project of seeking his canonization. I hope that you will succeed.

"Spain long cursed for its cruelties, corrupted and impoverished by gold which made it disdain the national soil, its true wealth, Spain, if we think about it, lost with the discovery of the New World; but who can say how much the Church has gained from it?

"It would be worthy of her, after so much ingratitude that she had the courage to deplore, to repair the wrongs by completing the work of her gratitude, by giving a world up there to the One who gave her a world here below, to the one who has completed Genesis and fled to a new page in the book of creation.

"It would be worthy of Pius IX, who a short time ago inscribed a poor Shepherdess in the Golden Book of the Elect, to inscribe one of the greatest names of humanity next to her, to place the celestial halo on one of the purest foreheads where glory has placed its own, to bring down the consecration which comes from God on him who has had the most august consecrations on earth: that of genius, and that which Pius IX himself bears at this hour with so much dignity: misfortune!"

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XII

But these distant connections, which Providence seems to have wanted so graciously to establish between the pontificate of Pius IX and the Catholic halo of Christopher Columbus, are invisible to these material men too foreign to the heart of the one and to the history of the 'other, to consider their mutual greatness. They in good faith assimilate the Cause of the revealer of Creation to that of an ordinary saint. Before them, the immensity of his work, the sublimity of his mandate, the evangelical fruits of his discovery, the unlimited extension given by him to the reign of Jesus Christ, the fulfillment of the prophecies, remain as not being. They do not understand that it is much less a question here of Columbus than of the Church; and the glorification of a saint, as well as the splendor of the Papacy. They do not feel that this beatification would be for Catholicism the means of affirming, sanctioning and solemnizing the most important of possible demands over the course of the centuries.

Let them know it well, the exceptional path by which they are astonished and irritated is the natural path of this Cause, the only one which is compatible with its greatness, and its own character, the side which will be employed. We declare to them that neither their secret actions, nor their slanders strewn in traps before our steps, will prevent the advent of this justice. Their efforts will only delay it, to the detriment of piety and ecclesiastical honor, but will not prevent it from finally happening. If they manage to deprive our beloved Pius IX of this glory, one of his successors will certainly be able to collect it and decorate his reign with it.

These meticulous characters, enemies, without knowing it, of the influence of the Holy See, do not suspect the reproach they arouse against its glory. They do not feel that the accusation of ingratitude is imminent, that it will soon rear its head in everyone's minds. The more the results of Columbus' work are known, the more we will be astonished at the forgetfulness or silence of the Church which he so prodigiously enlarged. Should we teach them? First directed against Spain and Italy, the reproach of ingratitude is now directed against Rome.

Italy replies that it gave birth to Columbus, it is true, but that this master of navigators only put his genius and his enterprises at the service of the crown of Spain.

Spain replies, for its part, that the Discovery benefited other nations much more than it did itself; because it was impoverished by the elite of its youth, who transplanted themselves to this new soil, and, devoting themselves exclusively to the exploitation of mines, forgot the motherland there, and separated from it Never.

These two Catholic nations, agreeing to reject the imputation of ingratitude, reject it on the Church, both maintaining that, in his enterprises, Christopher Columbus had much more in mind the extension of the Christianity as the increase in the wealth and science of Europe. And this is perfectly correct.

Genoa, the superb, rightly proud of having produced the greatest of men, rejects the accusation of forgetfulness long launched against it. To unburden herself of this grievance, which weighed on her honor, she referred it to the Church. The decurional council of the city, defending itself from the reproach of indifference, brings a formal accusation of ingratitude against the Papacy. It was

with a sort of solemnity that he stereotyped it in his magnificent reprint of the Codice Colombo Americano. There, it is clearly stated that the incredible services rendered to the Church of Jesus Christ by Christopher Columbus remained without reward; that when one comes to Rome, instead of being able to admire a magnificent monument erected to his glory on the Capitol, one does not encounter even a simple inscription there.

This reproach about the carelessness of the Sovereign Pontiffs, with regard to the one who so considerably extended the reign of the Church, has repeatedly presented itself to the minds of visitors to the Eternal City. We find it quite natural. However, upon reflection, this blame will itself be blamed.

Indeed:

It was neither by marble, bronze, nor by inscriptions or any monument that the successor of Saint Peter was to honor the herald of the Cross and glorify his virtues. If the Revealer of the Globe had only been a great man, a founder of beneficent institutions, certainly the Sovereign Pontiff, as head of the oldest government in Europe, could have granted him this distinction, which has often been obtained elsewhere so many secondary celebrities. But it was up to the Vicar of Christ to award to the envoy of God only a reward greater than that available to kings; a reward above the laws of man and his nature: the Celestial halo.

However, until us, the greatness of Christopher Columbus had not been fully revealed. It is only by delving deeper into the acts of her providential mission, by reconstituting the drama of this sublime existence in Christ, that we were able to discern the character of predestination which distinguishes her, in the midst of the prodigious events of which she was the means and origin. Pope Pius IX has already done infinitely more to honor Christopher Columbus than all his predecessors combined. His Holiness, after returning him in full to history, restored him to his mandate as envoy of the Church, and authentically recognized his apostolic role. For this, the current century owes him great gratitude. Nevertheless, while thanking the Sovereign Pontiff for this consoling declaration, Catholics would like to owe him further justice. The countless admirers of this great Pope aspire to see him crown his work.

As for us, in our inner sense, we are convinced that if the Head of Christendom does not give to the one who did so much for it a more marked pledge of his predilection, it is only through a prudent and holy reserve. The Pope would not like a too visible testimony of his sympathies to influence the opinion of Catholics, and especially the members of the Sacred Congregation of Rites. His abstention derives as much from his deep modesty as from the edifying scruples of his high piety. But one cannot doubt the natural attraction which brings his heart back to a memory so worthy of his own. Personally, we cannot forget with what admirable feeling of interest His Holiness deigned, in various circumstances, to listen to our account of the marvels wrought by this servant of God, before our title of Postulator of his Cause, now publicly recognized, would now deprive us of the pleasure of speaking directly to him on this subject.

XIII

To these opponents, voluntarily blind and deaf, but not mute, persisting in not considering the work of God, the movement of spirits, understanding nothing of the general interests of the Church, and believing themselves to be protected of the judgment of men, because, entrenched behind the customs of the Congregation of Rites, they haughtily answer us: "It is too late!" we must declare that such an end of non-receipt, opposed to that which increased by another half the space of the Earth, in order to bring the Gospel there, would not be admissible by any right mind, memo among the dissidents. It would, moreover, produce the most unfortunate effect; because everyone knows that the power of Pope Pius IX, to make an exception, equals that of Pope Benedict XIV to establish the rule. In the long run, the inflexibility of Rome would sadden the hearts of Catholics and take on the appearance of injustice; and this injustice would resemble ingratitude; and this ingratitude would have a more revolting character than that of the Spanish court; for, during Columbus's lifetime, the importance of his work was not suspected. It was well known that he had discovered a continent; but what was its extent, its configuration? we absolutely ignored it. What were the benefits to be gained from these discoveries? we didn't suspect it. We barely had a confused notion of America during the following reign.

Today, on the contrary, the results of Columbus's work appear in their amplitude, with the prodigious fruitfulness of their consequences. All governments, all peoples have benefited from its conception. All of humanity

benefits every day. This incomparable servant of God doubled the earthly domain and indefinitely accelerated the progress of science, the growth and conquests of the spirit. Above all, through him the human sacrifices which outraged Heaven, bloodied the Andes and decimated the Mexican populations were abolished. Through him, fierce peoples, refractory to divine law, successively disappeared; some transformed under the influence of Christianity, others declining in the face of civilization and gradually dying out in the depths of the solitudes. Thanks to him, the Gospel spread from one end of the new Continent to the other, and was also carried more quickly throughout southern Asia, to India, to Japan, to China, to Polynesia. .

No man has been more directly useful to the religion of Jesus Christ. It is therefore not appropriate today to reject his Cause with this sinister word: “It is too late!” because this delay was created by Providence itself for the glory of its Church. This delay was necessitated by the very grandeur of the Cause. It took more than three centuries to recognize its true character. Christopher Columbus could only be judged by his works, his works, only by their effects. And these effects are of such importance and scope that three hundred years were not enough to discern and demonstrate them all. Even now, we can only see certain parts of it.

XIV

Since, systematically, the adversaries of Columbus reject him without judging him or judge him without knowing him, we will soon moderate their disdain and question their routine, by notifying the rights of the servant of Jesus Christ to this Exception, that a multitude of Catholics hope from the Holy See.

We first declare to them that the Exception against which they are indignant will take place. We cannot, as of now, specify the time; but we consider it as already realized, because it is the only possible path, therefore inevitable, of a Cause that is entirely Exceptional in its nature, and which, by the force of truth, will one day necessarily arrive, whatever the principles, provisions, rules and practices followed in this matter.

No one honors the eminent memory of Popes Urban VIII and Benedict XIV more than us. No one appreciates the wisdom of their foresight, the timeliness of their decrees more than we; no one demands its strict, absolute maintenance,

rigorous application and immutable stability more than we do. But these rules cannot prevail against the chosen one of Providence, and forever deprive of the honors of the Church the one who has so prodigiously amplified it. We are even convinced that these two illustrious pontiffs, sagacious observers of the signs and character of holiness, would today be the first protectors of this great Cause, and that they would gloriously formulate for Christopher Columbus the Exception currently requested near their successor, the immortal Pius IX.

Moreover, the reception or rejection of our request will in no way modify our certainty and our affirmations, assured as we are of the triumph of this Cause. Now success is just a matter of time. Truth, like justice, never loses its rights in this world. This comes slowly, but it's coming. The truth, which is his faithful companion, will serve as his introducer into the Exception; we are sure of it. And because in this regard our conviction is unshakeable, leaving our adversaries to their prejudices and their pretensions, keeping all controversy away from us, we will bring together, to submit to the appreciation of Christians, historical indications and moral considerations. on which our expectation is based.

FIRST PART

FIRST CHAPTER

Without doubt, the most stubborn of doctors in Positivism cannot deny that if a Providence governs the universe, and can exercise its mysterious action on mortals, it was certainly during the main event of this Globe that its power must have manifested itself. Now, was there ever, on the surface of our planet, a more considerable fact than that which doubled its extent?

In his government of the worlds, the Creator has reserved days marked for all eternity. “One of the characteristics of God’s works,” Bossuet tells us, “is to take the appropriate time, and this is one of the most remarkable traits of his wisdom.”

The time when humanity would be allowed to lift the veil which, since its origin, had robbed it of the other half of its domain, was decided before the dispersion of peoples. And logically, if the time of this Discovery has been fixed, the man responsible for accomplishing it has been chosen. Consequently, this minister of the heavenly will had to be proportionate to the greatness of his mission; and we can affirm that, with Grace helping, between the Messenger of Salvation and his providential mandate, there was a divine equation.

As by an express intention of the Most High, the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles each had a name expressing the character or the role that they were going to deploy, the man who was the first to face the unknown Ocean, the sea dark, and plant the Cross on new shores, he too had received a name admirably figurative of his vocation; for it meant “the dove carrying Christ.” What nobility is such a name, and how compelling it is! Whoever had the honor of being clothed with it, far from ever bending under its weight, remained equipped with it like invincible armor.

A mysterious seal was placed on his destiny, and greatness was the mark of his election. This is why greatness appears in his words, in his writings and in his actions. What he did, what he said, what he wrote, everything that came from him retained the imprint of greatness. He was great through his faith; great in his hope; great in his charity; great in humility in triumph; great of triumph in

adversity; big in heart; great in genius; big talk character; great especially Catholically, by all of his virtues, each carried to the point of heroism.

In truth, since the times of the Savior, this man has been the most perfect that the world has admired, and perhaps the most admirable that the Church can see outside the sanctuary.

Among the saints whose zeal was not crowned with martyrdom, none has surpassed him in devotion; no one has raised his contemplation of the works of God higher; no one has felt a more ardent love for the Word; no one has submitted his life more entirely to the supreme will; no one has better understood Catholic unity in its essence; no one has shown such farsighted concern for pontifical sovereignty, the integrity of temporal power, and demonstrated such affection to the Holy See. No lay person has ever loved our holy mother the Church so tenderly, exposed himself to more imminent perils, to longer sufferings for her, and demonstrated a constancy greater than her own.

However, even today, a large number of educated men, priests, religious people are unaware of the life of this immortal servant of God, and are far from suspecting that the adventurer, to whom the ancient world owes new, was an exemplary Christian. For most of the faithful, the story of the Discovery is still a closed book. They do not know what is, what is worth, what expresses immense America with its double continent, nor how it was guessed. Having no idea of the work, they cannot judge the worker chosen for the most vast operation of human genius and divine mercy.

Through Christopher Columbus, the World was finally completed. Through it, man measured the amplitude of the seas, surveyed the space of the Earth, possessed the notion of its shape and its extent. Through him, the sign of Redemption reached all peoples. Through him, the name of the Savior resounded from one pole to the other. Through him, Catholicism penetrated to the ends of the world, and the Perpetual Sacrifice, of which that of the Hebrews was only the figure, was finally established on earth!

Christopher Columbus not only increased the domain of humanity; by teaching us the extent of our habitation, he raised our intelligence higher, made the idea of space broader, our views of Nature deeper, our conception of the universe less

inaccurate. He suddenly enlarged understanding, increased scientific investigations a hundredfold, increased comparative resources, the power of generalization, discovered, in addition to the islands and a continent, the main harmonic laws of the Globe, and sublimated in the Souls the notion of the Creator. Above all, he broadened the field of Christian charity, opening new regions to the Church to fertilize with his doctrine and his life-giving authority.

What embassy ever equaled that of this envoy of Providence to unknown nations?

So we will not be surprised to find, eight hundred years before our era, his mission predicted, and even his name pronounced in full, under the allegorical veil, by Prince Isaiah, that of the prophets that Saint Augustine calls "the clearest revealer of the Gospel and the vocation of the pagans". Also his coming had been announced in sacred iconography, from the first centuries of Christianity. We have fully demonstrated this elsewhere.

Although this man predicted, and, by a singular mystery, also prophesied in the New World, made his appearance at the first light of the Renaissance, in the midst of the literary movement of Spain, during the multiplication of printing presses, lyricism and the marvelous attached themselves to his person as a mark of his greatness. The prodigious and the supernatural enter so much into his life, his works so clearly bring out the action of Providence, that, despite the positive reality of his civil and military functions, he appears to us as surrounded by a nebulous halo across the prism of drama and epic. But this drama, filled with a breath of holiness, rises to celestial affinities, and this epic is matched in magnificence only by the poetry of Israel.

If hierarchically, by his position in the State, Christopher Columbus was Grand Admiral of the Ocean, Governor General of the islands, of the mainland and Viceroy of the Indies, Catholically, by his character of predestination and his manifest function, he was the Ambassador of God.

This is why we give it here the title of its quality. It is also the one that he received from the most learned of his contemporaries, the cosmographer Don Jaime Ferrer, the friend of the great Cardinal Mendozza, this prime minister who was nicknamed the third king of Spain. The Protestant school recognizes, for its part, that he presented himself to the Sovereigns of Spain as sent on an Embassy to

the most powerful princes of Christianity, those who practiced the most works of faith. Moreover, he himself, addressing to the Catholic kings the official report of his third journey, reminded them that "the Holy Trinity, in its infinite goodness, having chosen him as messenger of the Discovery, he had appeared in their royal presence , sent to the Embassy for this business.

Unknown to Europe, the Ambassador of God, in return for the continent he had acquired from Spain, was slandered, dismissed, loaded with irons, stripped of his rights, his titles, his honors by the crown whose power he had so immeasurably extended. Hoping to hide this ingratitude from the judgment of posterity, successively King Ferdinand, his son-in-law Archduke Philip and his grandson Charles Quint endeavored to stifle his memory. They believed they were burying him in eternal oblivion by taking silence as the guardian of his tomb. This plot by the Court succeeded, for a time, in misguiding public opinion and deceiving history. But the day of justice has finally dawned. After three centuries of indifference and errors, at the voice of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, this immortal fame has just emerged from the shadows. God resurrects her in his glory, thus adding new splendor to the illustrious pontificate of Pius IX.

II

When the Council of Trent opened its first session, on December 13, 1545, neither the person of Christopher Columbus nor his providential enterprises were sufficiently known. His name was eclipsed by that of Améric Vespuce. At that time, the recovery of most of the coasts of the American Continent had not yet been carried out. Inside, vast areas seemed impenetrable. Exploration trips were not printed.

The reports made by the sailors of various nations to their government were not made public. Jealous rivalries sought to conceal, rather than proclaim, the advantages these new lands offered the Old World. Besides, no history of the Discovery had appeared. The Imperial Archichronographer, Oviedo y Valdès, had only given the summary of his General and Natural History of the Indies. The entire work was only published in the year 1583, therefore twenty years after the close of the Council.

The members of the august assembly, unable to be edified about Christopher Columbus, made no mention of him. Certainly, having been aware of his mandate and his work, they would not have separated without giving a mark of

gratitude to the valiant Christian who had just prepared new conquests for Catholicism, as if he had foreseen that the heresy of Luther would soon separate the greater part of the States of Europe from it.

But nowadays, the entire space of the seas having been explored, no great discovery being possible, the results of Christopher Columbus' mission beginning to be appreciated, his superhuman work and his providential role can be studied. They justify each other. Their grandeur reveals both their origin and their destination. Countless sympathies and an admiration that tenderness and respect make resemble a cult, celebrate the Revealer of the Globe. We deplore the blindness of his contemporaries, the ingratitude of the world which owes him so many benefits.

While, obeying an august invitation, we wrote his story, a grave obligation was imposed on us. We were not only held to the most scrupulous accuracy, sincerity, reserve, the most in-depth study, but to the most unwavering impartiality. We had to depart from our own feelings, silence our intimate impressions, avoid any seduction of system or preconceived idea to conscientiously examine the documents, the facts, and present in their natural sequence the events which made up the life of this hero. We could not particularly highlight his apostolic mission, the words, the writings, the words which attested to his deep piety, the essentially evangelical goal of his navigations, and show his practice of Christian virtues in their highest perfection.

After having filfilled our mission according to our weakness, we put down the chisel on history. Our work has belonged to critics for eighteen years. Taking today the irresponsible pen of the news, we simply constitute ourselves the stenographer of Catholic opinion, on the subject of the most important of the Causes of Beatification. We will therefore now write without being dominated by august auspices. Recovering our full freedom of language, we will speak the public thought, perhaps surprising some, perhaps alarming others, among those who have not read our history of Christopher Columbus. We will speak clearly and clearly, without resorting to the slightest stylistic artifice. Abandoning all oratorical precautions, we enter directly into the heart of the subject.

III

Christopher Columbus was truly God's Ambassador to unknown nations. This providential man offers to our eyes the most dazzling manifestation of Grace and its mysterious intervention in human affairs.

The Ambassador of God was the spontaneous Legate of the Holy See in these new regions. No writ conferred this title on him; but he got it from circumstances; Providence sanctioned him with its blessings. He fulfilled apostolic functions, and on his return to Europe, a Pontifical Bull recognized his providential mission, declaring that he was very worthy, very recommendable and destined for such a great work. Without officially investing him with the title of Legate, the Papacy treated him as if he had it. She gave him credence in the unknown and the unverifiable; she followed his advice, adopted his views, guided herself according to him, according to his forecasts and his sympathies. And for having believed it, she made the inspiration of this Spirit who is with the Church shine sovereignly until the consummation of the centuries. Christopher Columbus provided us with the most astonishing proof of the invisible Assistance which ensures the infallibility of the Holy See.

The Ambassador of God, Christopher Columbus, is the glorification of Catholic genius and Pontifical indefectibility.

If his work surpasses all our conceptions, his moral perfection exceeds earthly proportions, and intrinsically offers all the signs of Holiness. We will go further in our frankness, and we will argue that we meet no man greater than him either in the world or in the Church.

This assertion may seem bold to the point of recklessness, reckless to the point of irreverence, so it is important to justify it immediately.

We affirm that after Saint John the Precursor, declared the greatest among those born of woman, and from apostolic times, no one has been greater in the world than Christopher Columbus. No one has been greater than him in the Church.

We first say the largest in the world.

Indeed :

True greatness comes neither from strength, nor from wealth, nor from the impact of victories. The extent of borders, the taste for the arts, do not constitute greatness. The greatest is not the one who has destroyed more cities, watered the ground with blood and tears, spread terror farther and farther. Of the conquests of Cyrus, Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon, time has left nothing. Should not the greatest be the one who brought the highest justice, wisdom, breadth of views, loyalty of means, endowed the people with beneficial institutions, showed strength of character, magnanimity, the example of the most difficult virtues?

What monarch, what wise man, what legislator can we compare to the man who doubled the extent of our habitation, established new communications between peoples, solved the most formidable problems of navigation, clarified the most difficult questions of geography, increased the growth of the mind a hundredfold, enriching it with invaluable discoveries, rectifying a host of errors, bringing unknown elements to study and observation; serving both marine, cosmography, astronomy, hydrology, physics, chemistry, philology, botany, medicine, geology, agriculture, acclimatization, meteorology, history natural science, comparative physiology, general history, philosophy, and giving our soul a more sublime notion of its author?

Was there ever a greater man than he who imitated no one, and whom no one will be able to imitate during the life of the Globe?

Let us search the annals of peoples for a name comparable to it!

IV

Also, the greatness which distinguishes him and places him above all comparison in the world, also separates him from the rest of the Christians in the Church.

Who can be placed above him or even alongside him?

His charity has earned us a world. He had conceived it in his mind to give birth to Jesus Christ. He wanted to tour the Globe, discover the peoples who were still unaware of the coming of the Redeemer, call them to salvation, and by means of

the riches of these new countries, redeem Palestine, or, in the event of refusal, conquer it through the arms, so that all the peoples of the universe could freely pay their homage to the tomb of the Savior. This was the first object of his aspirations, the secret of his zeal, his strength, and the last term of his hopes. Who among the saints reveals to us a nobler ambition?

Who is the saint who gave the Church half of this Globe to spread the Faith?

Which saint showed longer constancy?

After eighteen years of requests spent in vain, he was ready to start them again elsewhere, because by granting him what he asked for to undertake his Discovery, he was not assured of the means to one day redeem the Holy Sepulcher. .

In his love of renunciation, our Seraphic Francis of Assisi even stripped himself of his clothes; but he had no children. Christopher Columbus, father of a family, refused a principality of twelve hundred and fifty square leagues, for fear that the love of property would keep him on land, while there were still so many regions to discover, to proclaim the Savior there. plant his cross there. Did anyone among the canonized saints show us such self-sacrifice?

Which saint, before him, imposed on his people the perpetual obligation to pay tithe to God in his poor?

The Ambassador of God, fearing pride in his family, ordered the heir to his titles of Grand Admiral of the Ocean, Captain General of the Sea, Governor General, Viceroy of the Indies, not to never sign other than with this simple word: Admiral.

Did any saint show such filial solicitude towards the Papacy?

By founding a Majorat which was to bring in more than five hundred millions per year, he obliged his heir, in the event that the Sovereign Pontiff was threatened in his possessions, to come immediately in person at his feet, to defend him by arms with the people of his house and his subsidies. It requires the holder of the Majorât not only to pay the income to the Holy Father, but to deliver the fund itself to him, if necessary! Thus, he goes so far as to dispossess

his posterity for the benefit of the Holy See! Which saint, being a father, resolutely wanted to strip his descendants to help the Church?

Who is the canonized saint who, before Christopher Columbus, sensed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and ordered a church to be built in his honor?

Who is the saint whose evangelical zeal, anticipating Christopher Columbus, wanted to establish the Propagation of the Faith, and found the first seminary of Foreign Missions?

Who is the saint who, constantly in the presence of God, not content with beginning each of his letters with the sign of the cross and placing his pen under the protection of Jesus, Mary and Saint Joseph, always made his signature a prayer?

In which saint will we find a more striking example of Christian mercy?

Instead of putting to death ungrateful and rebellious sailors who had conspired against him and attempted his life, he repatriated them at his own expense, forgetting their crime and thinking only of their suffering during a perilous navigation. After their disembarkation, he claimed in their favor their arrears of pay, supported their petition, solicited for them, and, despite his own embarrassment, borrowed a sum in order to help them, while waiting for their payment to be ordered.

Which saint forgave his persecutors more sincerely?

As a reward for his work, for his incalculable benefits, he only received chains, and always kept them before his eyes in his study, as a teaching. Nevertheless, near his last moments, fearing that the sight of them would embitter the hearts of his sons against his persecutors, he ordered these irons to be placed with him in his coffin!

This man who appears to us so great in the world, and no less great in the Church, would he not, much better than the violent Constantine, have been worthy of cooperating in the assembly of a Council, of assist and protect him with his presence? His spirit at least had the right to be remembered there, his zeal to be honored there, his work glorified, his memory blessed by the Episcopate of the whole world, and his Cause to be recommended there to the supreme authority of apostolic power.

Without the impious irruption of the Piedmontese troops, and the sacrilegious brutality which suspended the Council of Rome, undoubtedly at the request of a large number of Bishops from the five parts of the Globe, the Ecumenical Assembly would have paid solemn homage to the Revealer of the Creation, and then did what the Fathers, gathered at Trent, would certainly not have failed to accomplish, if at that time the story of Christopher Columbus had been published.

While waiting for less dark days, we believe it useful to insert here the Postulation, the publicity of which was restricted by the interruption of the Council. As concise in its form as it is precise in its subject, this document, which was written in June 1870, in Sainte-Marie-sur-Minerve, offers a double importance from the point of view of the history and interests of the Holy See. It implicitly contains a testimony of gratitude and a victorious response to the accusations of forgetfulness raised against the Church by the enemies of the Papacy. We give the text, so as not to weaken, in an impotent translation, the worthy and majestic magnitude of this Latinity of which Rome alone still possesses the tradition.

@ (INSERT LATIN AND english translation here)

VI

The value of this document will not have escaped anyone. The main facts of the Cause are summarized in substance. Christopher Columbus received the title of Servant of God, awarded to him by Christians, and that of Apostolic Hero, even more worthy of his heart. However, for those of our readers to whom the Latin language has ceased to be familiar, we believe it would be appropriate to retrace the meaning of this precious text in French.

The Postulation begins by affirming the evangelical goal "of the very Christian Hero who deserved so well of religion and of all humanity". Christianissimo huic summèque de religione, totaque hurnanitate bene merito Heroi. world, the very exceptional interest shown in her by the Holy See. Sola Apostolica Sedes ut supernam viri missionem agnovit, ita omnibus quibus poterat modis adjuvasse videtur. She recalls that before ascending the Apostolic Chair, Pius IX, "following the particular design of divine Wisdom," Singulari prorsus divinæ Sapientæ consilio, had, "the first among the successors of Saint Peter," primus videlicet inter Beati Pétri successores, "crossed the Atlantic Ocean and crossed a large part of the American Continent , as in order to better judge, with one's own eyes, the greatness of the enterprise, and to recognize how indispensable the help of divine Grace was to the Christian heart which intrepidly opened this road to us, for the expansion of the Church and the salvation souls."

Sicque propriis veluti oculis metiri potueris. .ac melius perspicere quot quantisque divinæ Gratæ auxiliis christianum ejus pectus roborari debuerit.

This document also notes that, under the auspices of the same Pontiff, the exact story of the servant of God was published, and that immediately the fame of Christopher Columbus, emerging from the shadows of unjust oblivion, resonated sympathetically throughout the world. , exciting everywhere a feeling of gratitude towards "this Apostolic Hero". The text adds: "Piety transforms this feeling of the faithful into worship, and they strongly desire to see the public honors of the Church awarded by the Holy See to this incomparable man." Ut publiai Ecclesiœ honores ab Sancta Scde incompararili homini decernantur.

After having mentioned the generous initiative of the Eminent Cardinal Donnet, Archbishop of Bordeaux, and the support of the Catholic world for this approach, the Postulation admits that, at first glance, the introduction of the Cause seems to present certain difficulties, because no regular information on the life and virtues of this servant of God was formerly begun, and it could not easily be done in our days.

The obstacle is indicated very clearly. It consists of a lack of formality. However, as in a project of such importance the form cannot prevail over the substance, the difficulty does not seem insurmountable. “He is a truly exceptional servant of God”, cùm hic agatur de servo Dei plane extraordinario; and the Pope has the

right, by virtue of his apostolic omnipotence, to order the introduction of the Cause by an exceptional means.

This is why the Cardinals, Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops and other members of the Ecumenical Council of Rome, signatories of the Postulation, beg His Holiness to deign, for this purpose, to grant the necessary dispensations: "Ut dignityris sigrnre introductionis Causæ : præfati servi Dei, cum opportunis dispensationibus."

Soon, we will publish in a second work the names of the dignitaries of the Holy Roman Church, whose sympathies will have supported the Cause of Christopher Columbus. We consider it a duty of justice to offer them for the recognition of noble minds and hearts made to understand Catholic greatness.

CHAPTER TWO

I

We have so far only presented preparatory observations for the exposition of the Cause of Christopher Columbus. Let us now clarify its general appearance. Let us not let ourselves be stopped by fear of the strange and unexpected. The new is always new, and often only seems so to us by dint of being old; it is then from our forgetfulness or our ignorance that it draws its main interest.

Who is the Christian recommended by the Postulation to Justice of the Sovereign Pontiff?

He is the man who has exerted the most lasting and decisive influence on the human mind. By expanding in an unforeseen way the domain of science and contemplation, he gave a new and more powerful impulse to the centuries that followed him. The oracle of Protestantism, the universal scholar, Alexander of Humboldt, declares: "Where can the history of peoples," he says, "show us an era comparable to that in which events as great of consequences as the Discovery and the first colonization of America, the crossing to the East Indies, via the Cape of Good Hope, and the first circumnavigation of Magellan, are united with the flowering of art and the unforeseen progress of knowledge of heaven and earth? Such an era does not need, for its grandeur to strike us, the prestige of the remoteness in which it appears to us..., the boldness of the

Genoese navigator is the first link in the chain endless of these mysterious events."

Indeed, until him, humanity knew neither the form nor the extent of his stay. Something confused, uncertain, constantly hampered the meditations of genius, stopped its speculative daring, restricted the development of thought. Columbus dispelled the darkness, annihilated the fantastic, enlightened the understanding, placed various limits on the imagination, reduced the possible to its true proportions. By rectifying the conceptions of our mind, he reduced the sterile poetry of the unknown in favor of fertile realities. The entire human race remains indebted to him. No genius has, better than him, served truth, science, the Gospel which is the way and the life of nations.

But however noble it may be, is this triple greatness sufficient to completely contain the chosen one of Providence? do we not see in his role a superior action which directed him and placed him above the highest illustrations of history?

This man whom the Eternal seems to have associated with the completion of his work, charging him with revealing to us its magnitude and magnificence, where did he draw his authority from? How can we not be struck with respect before the immensity of the mandate with which Heaven invests it? Who will say the precise date of his vocation? Inaccessible to our gaze, evading our research, its origin goes back above the historical era, and is linked to the inscrutable decrees of divine goodness.

Since the times of Abraham, what destination has been more august than his? His mission shows us in spiritual kinship with Moses, Leader of the people of God, and Peter, Leader of the peoples of Christ. After Blessed John the Baptist, you will not find any Messenger of the Gospel comparable to his precursor in the New World.

The Most High had chosen it, from all eternity, reserving it in His designs for the day when His mercy would call to the benefits of Christianity the immense continent of which the Old World did not suspect the existence. By allowing him to reveal to us the totality of his work, God granted him the greatest honor that a mortal has received. Christopher Columbus was the Revealer of the Globe and

the first admirer of the wonders of the Word, which he proclaimed to be the empire on this unknown soil. He was the verifier of the annals of Creation; and would have had the right to countersign Genesis, certifying it as true. The first historian of the Old World was vindicated by the first Narrator of the New. Thanks to Columbus, science has since been able to ascertain the accuracy of Moses' account, and admit that on no point on Earth had the author of the Pentateuch received a denial.

Nowhere in our annals was predestination more evident than in this chosen one of the Lord. No matter how much we want to reduce him, to prosaify his intentions, his actions, to try to interpret his views and his determinations, by the vulgar motives to which most men give in, his nature, as a providential organ, resists all the disfigurements undertaken against his Catholic heroism. After having attempted to erase his own character and to disguise his celestial role, the Protestant School cannot help but admire in him virtues, to which nothing earthly is comparable.

II

Affixed distinctly, like a seal on his destiny, greatness marks the intimate details of his life, no less than his public actions. As a sign of its divine provenance, this grandeur remains immutable and characterizes its soul. It overcomes injustice, slander, persecution, distress, abandonment, forgetting, the course of centuries, and alone could still today increase the splendor of the supreme Pontificate.

Considering the greatness of the chosen one, so well matched to that of his work, it is logical to think that the prodigious event which would increase the space of the Earth by another half, and so happily accelerate the extension of the Catholicism was not absolutely ignored by these men of hope, separated from the world, to whom the spirit of the Lord revealed the future. Various Theologians and Paraphrasts, well versed in the Holy Scriptures, have admitted that several of the seers of Israel must have known of the event which was to double the Globe, and therefore, could have presaged the still so distant advent of Christopher Columbus.

Indeed:

To him alone apply, by him alone are the words of the first of the great prophets, concerning the nations overseas, explained.

To him alone apply, by him alone are the words of the last of the little prophets, concerning the Perpetual Sacrifice, to be established on earth, explained.

To him alone apply, by him alone can the sculpted or painted legends relating to the holy Giant who transports Christ across the waves be explained.

And when we say that the work of this first Messenger of the Good News across the Ocean was prophesied long before his coming, we are not simply expressing our personal impressions. Our conviction is supported by the agreement of serious and learned doctors, whose authorized opinion was published, coated with regular approval. Today, under the guarantee of papal protection, we express a thought that was kindly received by several Popes, including the Sovereign Pontiffs Gregory XIV and Innocent IX.

The first naturalist of the new continent, the Jesuit scholar, Father Joseph Acosta, wrote, two hundred and sixty-six years ago: "We are justified in believing that there is mention in Holy Scripture of an affair of such importance as is the discovery of the Indies and new world and conversion of it into the Faith. Isaiah himself says these terms: Ah! the wings of the ships which are on the other side... Several very learned authors declare that this whole chapter is heard from India.

The most important fact in human history was not hidden from all the prophets. Well before the reign of David, ancestor of Jesus Christ, the doctor of misfortune, the just, prophet and poet Job, who, before the formation of the Kingdom of Israel, divulged the dogma of Redemption and affirmed that of resurrection of the body, seems to have glimpsed it. He who described, in a magical style, the works of the Creator, guessed that they were not limited to what men had seen until now, and had a presentiment of other splendors.

A few years ago, during the religious festival which celebrated the restoration of the Rabida monastery, the first asylum of Christopher Columbus in Spain, the dean of the metropolitan and patriarchal Church of Seville recalled, from the pulpit, these expressions admirably revealing of Job: "Have you penetrated to the

end of the sea, have you walked to the ends of the deeps?... Have you considered the entire extent of the earth?..." The scholar Don Manuel Lopez Cepero drew from holy poem these significant words: "That all things arrive in their place, and succeed one another in their proper time; and that men could find the countries which separate the Ocean Sea, by seeking towards the West paths and roads which had not known the birds nor the sons of the trafficker... "The Sacred Orator pointed out that several commentators on the book of Job, including the very learned Brother Luiz de Léon, assured that this passage was relative to the discovery of the New World

As the centuries unfold, the prophecy about Christopher Columbus becomes more formal and explicit.

Notice it:

The main event of the world, after the Redemption, was not revealed to the least of the prophets; but to the one who holds the first rank among them: Prince Isaiah.

In his book of Ecclesiasticus, Jesus, son of Sirach, bore witness to him in these terms: "Isaiah was a great prophet and a faithful man before God... He lived by a great gift of the spirit of God this which was to come to pass in the last days." Saint Jerome says of him in his letter to Paula and Eustochium: "Although he had in view the facts which happened in his time, and in particular the return of the people to Judea, after the captivity of Babylon, his principal attention was to predict the calling of the Gentiles and the coming of the Messiah."

Having already promised Israel, the Deliverer, Isaiah utters the following words in the name of the Lord: "My first predictions (those made to Abraham) have been fulfilled; I make still new ones, and I reveal to you the future before let it happen."

Immediately the royal seer is carried away by rapture. He considers the expanse of the seas, the islands, their inhabitants, and, addressing the peoples, he cries: "Sing to the Lord a new song! publish his praise to the ends of the earth, you who go to the iner, and cross its expanse, you islands! and all you who inhabit them!

In the course of this vision, seeing those who will carry the Good News beyond the waves, the Prophet adds: "They will establish the glory of the Lord, and they

will announce his praise in the islands." In chapter XLIII, the prophet says again: "I will bring you children from the East, and I will gather you from the West." “Et ab occidente congregabo te.” "I will say to the weather: give me my children, and to the southern breath: do not prevent them from coming. Bring my sons from distant climes, and my daughters from the ends of the earth."

This is not simply a luminous line which suddenly crosses the soul of the prophet, never to reappear, or an isolated word, thrown solitary into the abyss of time. The idea of the vocation of peoples overseas, of the Continent and of the transatlantic Islands often comes back to him, and takes shape in an ever clearer way. God shows him the unknown shores of the Old World. At this sight, the royal seer, seized with enthusiasm, calls out loud to the islands and distant regions. This direct apostrophe serves as a preparation and introduction to the clarity which abounds in this astonishing sixtieth chapter, where the secret of the Revelation carried overseas is revealed so admirably, and on which two great doctors of the Latin Church meditated: Saint Jerome and Saint Augustine, more than a thousand years before the undertaking of Christopher Columbus.

In chapter XLIX, in his acclamation, bursting with imperative joy, the prophet calls the distant lands:

— “Listen, O islands, and you distant peoples, give ear!”

After showing the happy changes that will take place in souls, he adds, as if he already saw them realizing his words: "Behold, these will come from afar, and those from the north and the sea , and those from the southern land." "Ecce isti de longé ventent, et ecce illi ab Aquilone et mari; et isti de terra australi."

He sees the Messiah, rejected by Israel, and sent to the nations. “I have appointed you to be a light to the nations, and a salvation to the ends of the earth.” “Ecce dedi te in lucem gentium, ut sis salus mea usque ad extremum teræ”

After having announced, in chapter LII, the glory and humiliation of the Messiah; in chapter LIII, the Messiah, unrecognized by his people, his obscure birth, his humiliations, his sufferings, his death, his burial, the prophet, in chapter LX, invites the Church or the new Jerusalem to rejoice.

III

Its beginning is of dominant solemnity. The sound of his call blots out the sound of the Levites' trumpet. Never, perhaps, was anything more beautiful heard in Israel; divine inspiration appears here in its inexpressible splendor. It is the cry of the Seer before the celestial revelation. The centuries unfold in their majesty. The future touches the present, and blends with it into its superhuman contemporaneity. From the hour he speaks, to the extreme distance of the two thousand three hundred years that will follow, the prophet sees the admirable outpourings of the law of Grace, the Salvation carried across the immeasurable azure to the unknown islands, and to the unknown land.

He first contemplates the Redemption of the human race, its ineffable effects, the advent of the Gospel light, the supremacy of the Church, the perenniality of its doctrine. The old Jerusalem and the new Jerusalem appear to him at the same time; and he deals with one while speaking of the other, sometimes openly, sometimes symbolically, following the impulse of the Spirit.

How magnificent is the invitation that escapes from the lips of the prophet, in triumphant clamor:

“Stand up, be radiant, Jerusalem, because the day of your light has come; and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

“For darkness will cover the rest of the earth, and a fog will surround the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and in you his glory will shine forth.

“Nations will walk in the glow of your light, and kings in the splendor of your dawn.

"Look around you, and consider. All who you see gathered here are coming to be yours; your sons will come from afar, and your daughters from every side."

The prophet announces to the Church our house of Peace, our Jerusalem, that she will be amazed at this abundance; that her heart will expand when she sees a crowd of believers coming to her from beyond the seas.

And the vision becoming clearer, Isaiah sees the first ships crisscrossing the ocean. It looks like he was a witness to Christopher Columbus's first expedition. He likens his white canvases on the waves to the white clouds flying in the blue; and by a transparent allusion to his name, he compares his rapid sails to the wings of doves, returning to their nest. “Qui sunt isti qui ut nubes flying, et quasi Columbas ad fenestras suas.”

Without transition, the royal prophet expresses this event of future history as an act of eternal providence, a moment marked expressly.

"For," adds the Spirit, "the islands wait for me; and from the beginning it was intended that the ships should be at sea, to bring you your children from afar, bringing with them their silver and their gold, for the consecrate in the name of the Lord your God, and of the Holy One of Israel, because he has glorified you.”

Would we not believe that the prophet also saw the first Gold brought from the New World, to Rome, serving as a tribute to Christ, to the Virgin, and covering the ceiling of the Liberian Basilica, today Sainte-Marie Major?

And yet, as this prophecy so clear, so deep, so extensive, should not concern the era of Israel's prosperity, the geography of Palestine, the interests of Judea; but was only applicable to an era more than two thousand years ago, the Lord said to us, through the mouth of his prophet: "I, the Lord, will do these things suddenly, when the time will have come."

Indeed, in a relatively short space of time, in less than four centuries, a complete transformation took place on the islands and the land of the New Continent. All the relationships of peoples have been changed; the name of the Redeemer was carried in all parts of the Globe.

It is by considering the progress of the Gospel in the New World, at a time when heresies and apostasies separated the majority of the States of Europe from the Roman Communion, that the author of the Consolations of the Church, the illustrious Cardinal of Verona, Augustin Valerio, Bishop of Praeneste, admired the views of Providence, and applied the words of Isaiah to the discovery of the New Continent. He thanked Heaven to see this time when the Word was announced to the ends of the Globe; where so many effects of Divine goodness were shown, which allowed this century to contemplate things which remained

unknown to the great geniuses of previous ages, and which had been ignored by the holy Doctor Lactantius, and the most holy Aurelius Augustinus, one of the first Fathers of the doctrine. The learned Cardinal listed the results, so happy for the Church, of the work of Discovery. Although the name of its author did not escape his pen, we read it in his thoughts. To give these consolations to his Church, God used Christopher Columbus.

Likewise, we cannot think of the accomplishment of the Perpetual Sacrifice, which was solemnly predicted by the most recent of the prophets, Malachi, without reporting it to the author of the Discovery.

Not long ago, in his Pastoral Letter, on the occasion of the Fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Work of the Propagation of the Faith, Mgr the Archbishop of Paris, wrote on the subject of the Perpetual Sacrifice: "Where there was no that the desert, flourishing Churches have arisen. Where the most shameful superstitions reigned, the true God is adored; and Christian virtues are practiced wherever vice had altars. Thus the last of the ancient prophecies is literally fulfilled, who announced, twenty-three centuries ago, that in every place, from sunrise to sunset, the pure and spotless Sacrifice would be offered in the name of the Lord."

All this is exact, visible, and strictly incontestable. But what was the means of such a vast operation? To whom do we owe the establishment of the Perpetual Sacrifice? if not to the Minister of Providence, to the man chosen to unite the Globe, and unite the universality of Nations under the Gospel? Who made Malachi's announcement come true? To whom does the Church owe the happiness of rendering this perpetual homage to the Lord; to make this permanent offering of propitiation for the salvation of humanity; this incessant renewal of the holy holocaust, which now continues, without interruption, from one hemisphere to another in the Christendoms, like the life and the very movement of our planet on its axis? Why not finally name the predestined man, the incomparable servant of God, Christopher Columbus?

If the Revealer of the Globe was not formally called by name, like Cyrus, if Scripture did not clearly indicate, in full, the one whom Providence had deigned to choose as the instrument of its mercy, it is that God had reserved for himself, in his plans, this admirable name, this name that no other could surpass, neither among the Righteous of the ancient law, the patriarchs, the prophets, nor among

the apostles and the radiant army of Martyrs . No name possessed such a force of symbolism: The Dove carrying Christ! what could we compare to this sublime designation, representing at the same time the Heavenly Message, the Holy Spirit, the Redeemer Word!

IV

Christopher Columbus, who felt the spur of Grace pushing him on his path, silently contained in his heart the feeling of the great things that the Lord made him accomplish. He was not entirely unaware of his destination.

After his third journey, when he had taken possession of the New World, by planting the Cross there, he had no doubt that his work had long ago been revealed to the prophets. When, as a reward for his Discovery, he was outrageously deposed, stripped, imprisoned, mistreated, loaded with irons, while suffering these atrocities with holy resignation, he, so humble, so reserved about the graces received from God, he, always subject to authority, even unjust authority, and obedient almost to the point of death, raised his brow in the face of this height of ingratitude. The excess of iniquity forced him to reveal the secret of greatness that he kept within his breast. Then, for the first time, from the midst of his chains, he openly declares in writing, that the Most High has made him the herald of new heavens and a new earth; and without detailing the characteristic circumstances of his mission, he simply recalls what had been announced by the prophet Isaiah.

In Spain, his enemies, however powerful they were, could not offer him a denial. And among his compatriots, one of his oldest detractors noted the testimony he had given to himself, and corroborated it, by paraphrasing a passage from the prophecy concerning the nations overseas. In his scholia to Psalm XVIII of the Polyglot Psalter, printed in Genoa in 1516, Giustiniani recalls that Christopher Columbus said he had been announced by Isaiah. Well, despite himself, he is forced to implicitly recognize that the words of the prince prophet had indeed come true.

By studying the work of Discovery, who would not recognize in it a divine combination, the accomplishment of eternal views?

During the lifetime of Christopher Columbus, his august role was already declared by the most learned man of that time: the lapidary of Burgos, Don Jaime Ferrer de Baños, the friend of the great Cardinal of Spain, Mendoça, highly esteemed by the Catholic Queen, who invited him to her Court, and considered a letter from him as a service rendered to the State.

For this cosmographer, naturalist, traveler, geographer, polyglot, writer and theologian, Christopher Columbus, although placed in the middle of the traps of the century, the pitfalls of the Court, the difficulties of the Government, remained a unique personality, mysterious and sacred by Providence . Jaime Ferrer knew better than anyone how the errors of science, still so uncertain and empirical, had been of little support in such a work. For, of this indescribable work, then unfinished, he already grasped the superhuman character, and measured the indescribable greatness.

In this man whom he has never seen before, Ferrer senses immortality, the celestial mandate, the execution of a divine plan. His conviction is so complete that he wrote to the Catholic Queen: "I believe that Divine Providence has elected him and taken him into its service for this affair, which is only a preparation and a path to things. that this same Providence will show us later, to its greater glory, for the salvation and benefit of the world."

With his technical knowledge and practical experience, the lapidary of Burgos can examine well; he cannot discover, here, either a happy coincidence, nor a geographical or maritime progress. This luminous spirit discerns precisely, in Christopher Columbus, the signs of election which distinguish him from the rest of the great men. Also, when, by Isabella's order, he submits his ideas to her, relating to the cosmographic dispute that arose between Spain and Portugal, while reminding her of his success, he speaks neither of science nor of courage, neither constancy, nor any earthly interest. It is about his providential ministry, his apostolic role and their future results that he talks first.

Remarkable circumstance; he wrote his letter at the time of the most violent outburst of public opinion against Christopher Columbus and his companies. The families of the hidalgos, whose excesses he repressed, in the Spanish island, those whom he forced to respect the freedom and the lives of the Indians, formed a plot of attacks and slanders, under which his popularity was already sunk. The taunts, the offenses, the hatred and contempt, today replace the enthusiastic

acclamations which greeted his first return to Europe. .But this reversal of fortune, these shocks to human versatility are not worth thinking about. Jaime Ferrer takes pity on these errors of our weakness, considers them as non-existent, and passes them over in silence. The greatness of the role of Columbus cannot suffer from our smallness. It is above the efforts of man.

The admiration of this vast spirit for the Lord's chosen one enhances him himself. His letter is inspired by his contemplation; and he anticipates by two centuries the elevations of Bossuet, and his broad views on universal history. For him, Columbus' enterprise was "an expedition more divine than human." The Discovery remains a great mystery, subject of his meditations; and the chosen man, "an Apostle and Ambassador of God, sent by his Divine Council, to publish his holy name in parts of the Earth where the truth is unknown."

Although the existence of the New Continent is not yet assumed by anyone, Jaimc Ferrer senses it; and therefore announces the next circumnavigation of the Globe, and the outpouring of the Gospel throughout the Earth. He declares to Columbus that God, who had sent the apostle Saint Thomas, from West to East, to promulgate our holy Catholic law in the Indies, now sends him to the opposite side, from East to West, in order to fulfill this word : "In omnem terrain exivit sonus eorum."

V

After having been, at long intervals, announced three times before the times of the Messiah, the work of Christopher Columbus was even more evident, from the era of the persecutions of the Church.

At this time, the prediction ceases to be contained in a book. It takes on an external form, takes on a body, is salient to the eyes, palpable to the hands, and becomes the most common, although for a long time the least understood, of the prophecies. In the absence of a written text and a responsible author, we find it published in stone, wood and marble, incised, engraved and sculpted a thousand times, reproduced endlessly by frescoes, especially statuary, and, for several centuries , hospitably sheltered in our churches.

We have sufficiently established it elsewhere: the figure of the giant saint, who is venerated under the name of Saint Christopher, esoterically contains the prophecy in relief of the saint who was to carry the Good News to the other hemisphere. We declared that without Christopher Columbus, this image of the holy giant remained a perpetual enigma.

For eighteen years, no one has been able to object to our assertion. We questioned young and old, asked illustrious Academicians of France, foreign scholars, Theologians, Missionaries, Consultors, Definitors, Bishops, Archbishops, Cardinals, how, by removing the role of Christopher Columbus, it would be possible to explain the religious emblem honored in our temples. No one could have failed to recognize that in fact, by a prodigious singularity, this colossal effigy seems to relate solely to Christopher Columbus.

Let's listen to the Hagiography.

What was Saint Christopher? — A pagan, named Oferus, a sort of Goliath, proud of his size and his strength, who hoped to rent his stature and his spear at a good price to some king from around Syria, when the sight of a miracle suddenly converted him. Admitted to baptism by Saint Babylas, bishop of Antioch, he only wanted to be called Christopher, preached the Gospel in several countries of Asia Minor, and, during the persecution of the emperor Decius, sealed his faith with his blood.

This soldier of Christ was quickly famous in the East and received a cult. Now, how was the effigy of Saint Christopher shown to the faithful? We never experience it with the commemoration of the past, the insignia of martyrdom, its crown, its palm, or the instruments of torture, but only with figurative attributes of the future. Nothing in the iconography of Saint Christopher recalls his actions; everything, on the contrary, adapts to a new, broader and higher meaning of its name.

Just as the main facts of the Old Testament contain a double expression, that of the accomplished event, and the mystical figure of a future event, the image of the holy martyr contained a double meaning. He who shed his blood for faith is represented by the great man who must serve to spread it throughout the universe. And the prophetic effigy of the latter, through the effect of a particular will of Grace, becomes popularized and multiplies rapidly. From the very land of

Redemption, from the countries of the East, this prophetic figure soon spread throughout the Christian world. It is so clearly a prophecy in relief that it loses all meaning if we relate it to the past, and it is not applicable to any personality in history, until the arrival of Christopher Columbus.

Not only does this symbolic image of Saint Christopher represent journeys across the waves, distant transplantation, the Good News brought to unknown peoples; but it symbolizes the entire system of Discovery, as well as its goal. An admirable thing! at a time when the shape of the Earth was no less unknown than its extent, the sphericity of the Globe was quietly affirmed as a fact, and exposed to all eyes in our temples, as a revealing sign. Oh! depth! the entire system of Columbus, as well as his sacred purpose, were there declared, we might say prophesied openly!

Examine this instructive image.

The Catholic Giant crosses the Sea, carrying the child Christ who holds in one hand the Terrestrial Globe surmounted by the Cross!

Is it clear enough? to this what can we add?... While from one era to another, scientists exhausted themselves in sterile debates on the dark Ocean, the habitable zones, the depth of the Continents, the space occupied by waters, quietly, in our churches, the roundness of the Earth, and the future effusion of the Gospel, on all its parts, were taught by the colossal effigy of the bearer of the Good News.

If the symbolic figure of Saint Christopher can only relate to Columbus' mission, the legends which accompany him can only concern him alone. None of them retraces the Martyrdom, and is not commemorative of the past. Their meaning always forms an allusion to the time to come. To avoid multiplying examples, let us cite just two.

In Paris, the oldest wood engraving in the National Library shows us the giant saint crossing the waves. The Latin legend says:

Qui te mane vident N’octurno tempore rident.

In Venice, in the ancient Greco-Byzantine Basilica of Saint Mark, near the entrance, under the arch of the portal on the left, is reproduced in hard mosaic (Opus Alexandrinum), the giant saint who carries Christ, holding in his hand the Terrestrial Globe surmounted by the Cross; thus summarizing the theory of Discovery, and its results. Below the venerable affigy, we read these Latin words:

Whoever looks at the face of St. Christopher,
For on that day he is held by no infirmity.

A little further on, we see the motto which contains the true reason for the zeal of Christopher Columbus, and its happy fruits:

"The root of all honors is charity." "

Let us not forget that these legends contain only ideas of happy arrival, of divine love, of consolation, of happiness, directed towards the future, and outside of any relationship with the image of the past.

In Rome, when from the Colosseum, saturated with the blood of the Martyrs, the pilgrim goes to the Patriarchal Basilica of Lateran, first residence of the Popes, he encounters on the left the old church of Saint Clement. There, inside, at the corner of the wall of the chapel of Saint Catherine of Alexandria, renowned for the paintings of Masaccio, is seen an ancient fresco, where the character of gentleness and love, of the saint who will carry Christ beyond the waves, is rendered with admirable happiness of expression.

The spirit of the legend breathes entirely in his features. The contemplator of the Word turns his head, raising a gaze of love on the child Christ, who carries in his little hand our planet surmounted by the cross. Curiously enough, instead of the thick, black beard with which the giant saint was graced in the North; here, in the Capital of Christianity, the artist's brush has truly given him the blond color, which was that of Christopher Columbus, showing us with the clothes of his time, and at the age when he conceived his plan .

The colossal role of Christopher Columbus explained so naturally the colossal effigy of the holy Giant, that this explanation was given publicly to Spain, during the very lifetime of the Ambassador of God, after he had planted the Cross in the New World.

The Catholic Queen then ordered Juan de la Cosa, the most skilled geographer of that time, to draw up the general map of the overseas countries, added to the crown of Castile. The latter, having carried out this work with extreme care, wanted, out of a feeling of justice, to place there, when finishing it, the name of the author of the Discovery. But instead of inscribing it vulgarly, in full, he preferred, to pay him solemn homage, to represent it in a symbolic way; and he painted the popular image of the holy giant; thus recalling, in the same breath, the ancient prediction, and the one who had finally fulfilled it.

VII

The author of the first collection of maritime voyages that was compiled in the sixteenth century, the learned Jean-Baptiste Ramusio, Secretary of the Senate of Venice, who had studied the things of the sea, knew the contemporary pilots of Columbus, and deepened the causes of the Discovery, was also struck by the character of predestination which distinguished the chosen one from the Lord. He boldly describes this worker of Providence. It is without hesitation that he speaks of his celestial vocation. His expressions deserve to be noticed. “God our Lord,” he said, “having chosen Christopher Columbus, and having granted him the value and greatness of soul necessary for this enterprise, etc..” — We see: the Secretary of the Senate of Venice, well informed about Christopher Columbus, speaks neither of his nautical skill, nor of his genius, nor of his superiority in the sciences; but only of the gifts of God, of the moral qualities of the man raised up. It is not to human strength that he attributes this triumph over the unknown and the formidable, he relates it to its true cause.

About two centuries later, the work of Christopher Columbus having greatly developed, a great scholar of Spain, historiographer of the Navy, the author of Historical Research on the Principal Discoveries of the Spaniards in the Ocean Sea, fortified with technical studies, and equipped with precious documents, having meditated at length on the Discovery, recognized that for its accomplishment the intervention of a divine auxiliary had been essential. His

conviction, in this regard, was so profound that he admitted that we could not, without doing violence to his reason, admit that, in such an enterprise, Christopher Columbus was not in communication with the spirit of God.

Thus, the highest scientific authorities in Spain: the first Cosmographer, the first Geographer, and the first Maritime Historiographer, each in turn bore witness to the providential character of the Revealer of Creation.

CHAPTER THREE

I

We have just briefly sketched some distant clues to the vocation of Columbus; let us now take a look at its own individuality.

Even from a purely human point of view, the Revealer of the Globe still offers a strange subject for observation, and can hardly be explained apart from Providence. The existence of this man is not simple and only personal. It contains something complex, great, painful and infinitely instructive. Just as the light is placed on the bushel to enlighten, he seems to be set as an example to all humanity, whose most diverse conditions he summarized in his life.

Christopher Columbus, from noble stock, was successively: apprentice, worker, cabin boy, naval officer, designer, copyist, bookseller, squadron leader, grand admiral, viceroy, captain general, founder of colony, legislator, administrator, engineer, agronomist, naturalist, builder, missionary, spontaneous Legate of the Holy See and its promoter of the Word in the New World. From the lowest ranks promoted to the highest dignities on earth, he nevertheless remained destitute, in the midst of the incalculable riches with which he endowed Spain. He was persecuted, loaded with irons, condemned without being heard, and, despite his recognized innocence, remained stripped of his titles, his honors, deprived of his rights, his income, delivered to poverty. He died, without a single regret being cast on his grave. He obtained neither burial at state expense, nor funeral oration, nor monument, nor epitaph. His name, banned from the court, disappeared for a time from the memory of men. Then, silence was followed by slander; the glory of his discoveries was garnered by an intruder.

And yet the power of his memory has overcome time. His incomparable greatness elevates him above all fame. This is because the mark of divine election endures eternal; human malignity can attempt to obscure it, but it does not erase it. His mark remains indelible.

The Ambassador of God joined the majesty of the patriarchs to the zeal of the apostles. Like another Joseph, who, a stranger in Egypt, was the first there after the King; he too, a stranger to Spain, appeared there first after the sovereigns, in his capacity as viceroy of the Indies. Just as Jacob was able to enjoy the elevation of Joseph, the father of Columbus saw his last years enlightened by the illustration of his son. Joseph, suddenly released from prison, suddenly found himself in royal splendors. On the contrary, Columbus, an innocent known to him, at the height of his greatness was thrown into irons. But the fame of its chains forever eclipses the most brilliant laurels of triumph. It was through the pain of the soul, the excess of human ingratitude, that the Most High wanted to consecrate the glory of his Servant, by giving him the opportunity to display his strength during these terrible trials, his submission, his faith, his hope and his charity.

Let us cite another man about whom all civilized people are concerned, several centuries after his death, whose glory rises and grows over the years, instead of decreasing and fading away as happens with ordinary? He remains alone, separated from humans by his destiny beyond the tomb, as he was from the living by the sublimity of his mandate. His fame underwent vicissitudes like no other. What was said, what was written, what was produced with praise, admiration, controversy, and claims about it cannot be compared to anything. There is no name that recurs as frequently as his in colloquial language, explanations of science, morality, edifying or instructive comparisons. Disappeared from this earth for three hundred and sixty-seven years, he occupies even more place in the minds of nations than all contemporary illustrations.

God showed himself admirable in him as he is in his saints. Christopher Columbus was only great because of the one who called him. He had no other superiority over his contemporaries than his faith. We cannot say it enough; because in reality his faith, only his faith, gave us a world.

II

As a scholar, Columbus did not enjoy any solid recognition. He was never counted among the learned; he did not have the honor of sitting alongside them at scientific congresses. We don't see him joining any academy. A historian of the Indies, Lopez de Gomara, even contests his sufficient technical erudition. He claims that his plan was suggested to him by a Spanish pilot, and adds with confidence: "I say that Christopher Columbus was not learned, only good judgment." On the other hand, scholars today reduce its merit to very little. The oracle of modern science, the Protestant Alexander of Humboldt, declared him "devoid of all intellectual culture". He confirms this opinion in various writings, and finds him "devoid of education, foreign to physics and the natural sciences". The illustrious Humboldt insists strongly on his "absolute lack of knowledge in natural history", and tells us without any embarrassment: "Columbus, unfamiliar with mathematics, was, from his first voyage, led by false observations made in the neighborhood of the Azores, on the movements of the polar star, to believe that the terrestrial sphere was irregular."

In Paris, a renowned member of the Academy of Sciences takes pity on Christopher Columbus' ignorance on cosmographic questions. He considers it more backward than it was in the time of Alexander the Great, and goes so far as to find "Aristotle much more advanced in geography than Christopher Columbus".

When it came to hydrography, Columbus had no advantage over the pilots, his contemporaries. He only had at his disposal the maps and instruments that had been used since the thirteenth century, and that Raymond Lulle mentioned in his "Fenix de las maravillas del orbe", written in 1286. These were those that the Portuguese used to approach the Rio d'Oro in Africa in 1346, and which the Normans then used in 1367 in their discoveries of the Azores.

Being as poor a mathematician as our academicians claim, it became difficult for Columbus to be a skilled sailor. Because it is not enough to have the theory of the ship, to be an expert in maneuvering, it is also necessary, with the help of calculation, to know how to navigate the seas. Now, one of our old French travelers, Thévet, who had known sailors who sailed under the orders of Christopher Columbus, assures us that "the Admiral was not very experienced in naval matters." In Italy, a very competent authority on these matters shared this

opinion. Jeronimo Girava Terracones, in his Cosmography, published in Milan in 1556, judged "Christopher Columbus, of Genoa, a great sailor and mediocre cosmographer".

To these assessments transmitted by tradition or formulated on hearsay, is added the very important declaration of an ecclesiastic, learned and generous, who, having known Christopher Columbus personally before his enterprise, curiously followed his debates at the Salamanca conferences, and became his defender, during the Scientific Congress, against certain crusted theologians. They, indignant at the fact that a layman dared to support, on the subject of the Antipodes, an opinion opposed to that of Saint Augustine and Nicholas of Lyra, went straight to denounce him to the tribunal of the Inquisition. Fortunately, the familiar relations of the young abbot Alexandre Geraldini with the house of the cardinal minister of Spain allowed him to avert the danger in time. Later, this worthy priest, whose taste for letters attached him to discoveries, was named Bishop of Saint-Domingue. In the account of his wanderings, entitled: Journey to the Equinoctial Regions, and dedicated to the Sovereign Pontiff, the learned Bishop, while doing justice to the modest knowledge of the Viceroy of the Indies, places his moral greatness infinitely above his various aptitudes. . He said it in his own words: "Et ante omnia magnitudine animi illustris."

Furthermore, Columbus knew better than anyone about the value of his special studies and his nautical skills. He even humbly admitted that reasoning, world maps and mathematics did not benefit him much for his business.

III

We recall these testimonies, in order to clearly establish that the man, destined to complete this globe and its geography, was not himself a transcendent geographer, and did not derive any privilege or superiority from his own science. He did great things with mediocre means, through the Grace that worked within him. And make no mistake: if Christopher Columbus had possessed in substance all the cosmographic knowledge of his contemporaries added to that of his predecessors, this monopoly, far from serving him, could only have led him further astray. ; because what science then professed doctrinally constituted the most enormous and serious error. She confidently taught a non-existent fact, a principle diametrically opposed to the fundamental laws of this globe. This is

because the Ocean occupies only a seventh part of the Earth, while it covers more than two thirds of it. Let's admit it: with such errors, science could hardly be of much benefit to him; and probably, as one of the most violent enemies of the Church, the sworn poet Victor Hugo, said: "If Christopher Columbus had been a good cosmographer, he would not have discovered America."

Here then is an ignoramus who disconcerts science and surpasses it to the height of centuries. In addition, he adds to his discovery of a New World seven great cosmographic conquests, the least of which would be enough to immortalize an entire Academy. Isn't this strange and inexplicable by pure reason?

Well, we do not hesitate to say it: the person of this ignorant person, according to worldly knowledge, was precious before the Lord, and necessary for the execution of his eternal decrees. The mission of Christopher Columbus having been prophesied, it was not only his ideas, his practical experience, his strength of resolution that were needed to accomplish it. His own individuality, with his mind, his soul, his heart and the power of his name, was indispensable. The Crown of Portugal acquired proof of this, at its own expense.

In his letter to His Holiness, the eminent Archbishop of Bordeaux, Mgr Cardinal Donnet, very skillfully highlighted a decisive fact, which, until now, historians had not taken enough into account. King Joam II, having surreptitiously obtained a copy of the notes, maps, calculations of Columbus and the scientific data on which he based his project, believed that he had it in full, and could, from then on, dispense with his person. He charged the most skillful captain of his navy, equipped with the best ship and an elite crew, to secretly execute the plan entrusted to him. The instructions were punctually followed; but the attempt had no effect. It was renewed in due course; it was always unnecessarily.

For seven years, the King, who, according to the testimony of Columbus, understood things of the sea better than any other Prince, had the leisure to start the test again, without being discouraged by these repeated failures. But in the end, this prince, who was nicknamed the Perfect One, because of his great penetration, guessing, by a mysterious presentiment, that success attached itself to the person of Christopher Columbus, wanted to obtain it at all costs. . He made him the most attractive offers, accepting in advance all his conditions, and, while he was in Seville, deigned to write to him honoring him with the title of

friend. The Messenger of the Gospel, unable to deal with a sovereign who had been guilty of fraud, nor to associate political views with a work of Christian propaganda, unwaveringly rejected these requests.

Later, upon learning that Spain was preparing an expedition of discovery in the port of Palos, Joam II felt violently angry. His pride was no less irritated than his ambition. Certain that without the person of Christopher Columbus any new effort would be useless, he did not try to get ahead of Castile in his enterprise, although his fleet was ready, and did not imagine any other expedient to prevent the success of the Spain, than to kidnap by force the predestined man. Orders to seize it were sent to all the governors of the Portuguese islands, while three warships were cruising in the waters of the Canaries where they were to release.

This fact has a clear meaning.

Valor, nautical science, consistency were not enough for success. While having appropriated the knowledge, the calculations, the enlightenment and the intimate thoughts of Christopher Columbus, the most skillful of princes, master of the first navy in the world, the only one which had still made important discoveries, could do nothing, because he did not have with him the chosen one of the Lord, the predestined man, marked with this prophetic name: the **Dove carrying Christ!**

CHAPTER FOUR

I

It would seem very strange to us, we admit, that the man, the object of such favors, would not have been, in some way, revealed to the Successors of the Prince of the Apostles.

Indeed, the mission of Christopher Columbus was, from the beginning, anticipated by the Holy See. A natural relationship existed between the Head of the Church and the One who would extend his reign. This close and indissoluble bond, although formed over a long distance, has remained unknown to some historians, forgotten by many others; but never ceased to connect the work of Christopher Columbus to the Pontificate.

Roman influence largely cooperated with the Discovery.

On this question, consulting the annals and chronicles would be superfluous; the facts speak abundantly.

From the year 1474, before any State knew of Columbus's project, the Roman Court was informed of it.

The virtuous Genoese, Jean-Baptiste Cibo, upon ascending the papal throne under the name of Innocent VIII, knew that one of his compatriots aspired to carry the Cross to the parts of the Earth beyond the seas. This idea aroused the attention of the cosmographers of the Eternal City. Later, a librarian of His Holiness showed the Vatican, on a world map, the designation of an unknown land in the Atlantic spaces.

Christopher Columbus, already refused by three governments, was wasting his years in vain in solicitations near the Court of Castile, when a former Nuncio, Mgr Antonio Geraldini, returned from Rome, spoke about him to the great Cardinal of Spain. This prince of the Church immediately obtained, for this obscure stranger, an audience with Kings. During the famous conferences of Salamanca, it was again this Prince of the Church who defended the orthodoxy of Columbus against his adversaries, eager to deliver it to the members of the Holy Office. At the time when the Council of State of Castile rejected, as exorbitant, the conditions posed by the Genoese sailor, the illustrious Cardinal found them fairly proportionate to the size of the enterprise. It was as a result of his trip to Rome and his relations with the learned librarians of the Vatican that the eldest of the three Pinzon brothers resolved to share the perils of Columbus, and, by providing him with two ships, made the departure possible. .

Columbus opened his sails, assisted in advance by the wishes and blessing of the venerable Pontiff, who was not to see his return. The moral participation of the Pontificate in the work of the Discovery is a fact remaining in Roman tradition, recalled on the tomb of Pope Innocent VIII, and authenticated by the declaration of Pope Pius IX, in his brief of December 10, 1851.

When, for the first time, he returning to Europe, having barely escaped the most frightful storm, Christopher Columbus, from the middle of a still turbulent sea, wrote to a considerable personage of the Court of Spain, announcing his Discovery, the results of which he predicted; His piety was expressed in this story; he wanted thanksgiving to be addressed to Heaven, the altars to be adorned, and solemn processions to be held. Spain took into account neither this desire nor this very important letter; perhaps even this request for religious ceremonies seemed reckless to him, coming from a secular person.

But Rome hears the voice of its Messenger. The invitation to Christian festivals does not shock her. A copy of Columbus's letter was immediately reproduced and read with incredible avidity. The date of the Message, the speed of its sending, the speed of the translation, the prompt authorization to print, the instantaneous exhaustion of the edition, the frequency of reprints, say, as clearly as a page of history, what emotion then ran through the Eternal City. Such was the enthusiasm at the Sanctuary of Catholicism that the neo-Greeks, the half-pagan teachers of classical literature, of whom Pomponius Lætus seemed to be the leader, themselves shed tears of happiness. How can we doubt that pious men, worshipers in spirit and in truth, did not run to thank God for the new grace given to the human race; that the divine Word was not publicly thanked; that the congregation of the faithful going to the Seven Basilicas did not form a procession as in Palos, and on the road to Barcelona, while at this moment of flowering the first fruits of spring covered the altars and perfumed the temples?

Nine days after the appearance of this letter, the successor of Pope Innocent VIII felt the need to solemnly honor the Ambassador of God. Although Christopher Columbus had only encountered islands, the Head of the Church already salutes in him the Revealer of the Globe. In a memorable Bull, he declares it very worthy of such a work: utique dignum..., recommendable for numerous reasons, plurimum commendandum, and made for such a vast enterprise..., AC TANTO NEGOTIO APTUM. . . . . .

The work of Discovery being essentially an evangelical enterprise, the civil government of Spain keeps silent about the services of Columbus, and seems to leave it to the Vicar of Jesus Christ to appreciate their greatness. Remarkably, this august attestation from the Head of the Church is the only public testimony that his Messenger received from Kings and peoples during his life.

Let us not forget, either, that a Prince of the Church was, in Spain, the first to celebrate the return of Columbus with a truly royal celebration, the only one that history has deemed worthy of memory.

From the first moment, by a mysterious attraction, Rome had recognized Christopher Columbus as its own. For his part, this untitled Legate, immediately after his Discovery, aspired to come and tell the story at the feet of the Holy Father; but imperative demands deprived him of this happiness.

Without ever having seen or heard the predestined man, without being able to measure his mandate, still unfulfilled, the Papacy, instinctively, believes in him and entrusts him with its honor. She grants him an incredible, incomparable mark of confidence, unique throughout the ages: Christopher Columbus is first of all her advisor and her inspiration, in circumstances as complicated as they are unforeseen, as unforeseen as they are exceptional, as exceptional as they are perilous for the moral authority of the Church.

Prodigious thing! Without effective proof, without possible demonstration, in the absence of any scientific control and any human criterion, the Holy See, contrary to its customs and its usual prudence, gives credence to it in the unknown and the unverifiable. It is according to his own opinion that he engages in the midst of the most thorny questions, resolves the boldest problems of still uncertain geography, accepts a whole new cosmographic system, disposes of the future; made, between the crowns of Spain and Portugal, the division of the world to be evangelized, and traced, with truly miraculous precision, this famous Line of Demarcation, which henceforth remains an eternal subject of admiration and astonishment for the philosopher .

And, because it believed in Columbus, the Papacy can present to the world the most demonstrative, the most imposing example of this superior light which is with it until the consummation of the centuries, and assures it the Infallibility which rightly established the last ecumenical council in the year 1870 as a dogma.

III

As a result of the intimate relationship which united the mission of Columbus to the government of the universal Church, a mark of predilection, delicately expressive, was given by the Holy See to the Ambassador of God.

As the Franciscans had, from the beginning, supported his first steps in Spain, and seconded his final efforts to put to sea, it was from their Order that the Sovereign Pontiff chose the first Vicar Apostolic intended for these new regions, instead of accept the Benedictine monk, a skilled diplomat, who had been proposed by the Catholic King. Likewise, it was from the Franciscan family that the Pope drew the first religious to be appointed bishop in the Antilles: Brother Garcias de Padilla.

In the relations established between the Holy See and Christopher Columbus, we constantly find an exchange of generous trust on the one hand and absolute devotion on the other. After his second voyage, when the Grand Admiral of the Ocean, Viceroy of the Indies, founded a Majorat with a view to one day freeing the Holy Places, which he wanted to give as an appanage to the domain of Saint Peter, it was directly under the protection of the Head of the Church whom he places the maintenance of his rights.

When the Revelator of the Globe had taken possession of the new Continent, feeling his mission accomplished, he began to write the history of his three expeditions, giving it the form of Caesar's Commentaries, that is to say, speaking of himself in the third person. It was not in honor of earthly Sovereigns, but only for the spiritual sovereign of Catholicity, that he had such attention and occupied himself with such work.

At this time, Julius II succeeded Pius III.

The enthronement of a new Pope changed nothing in the existing relationship between the Supreme Pontificate and the Ambassador of God. Julius II considered Christopher Columbus so well as his natural Legate in the New World that he sometimes complained of not receiving news from him often enough.

While preparing his last expedition of Discoveries, the Messenger of the Church asked the Holy Father for a delegation of power, in order to choose

himself a few elite subjects from the various religious Orders and to bring them as cooperators of his apostolate. He had also entrusted the prior of the Carthusians of Seville with a commission for Rome. During his trip, Rome constantly remained before his eyes. The last letter that, from the middle of the seas, he sent to Europe by way of the Canary Islands, again concerned an affair of Rome.

And, through the indescribable trials of this disastrous navigation, when, far from all human help, he lay sick and shipwrecked on the coast of Jamaica, then completely wild, at once threatened by the plots of the natives and the rebellion of the crews , his thoughts, crossing the Atlantic, turned towards Rome. He expressed to the Kings the desire to go there as soon as divine mercy would have rescued him from his stranding.

Then, upon returning from this expedition, unequaled in suffering as well as in wonders, where the supernatural, taking an active role, made itself visible, and clearly made its entry into history, although exhausted, overwhelmed in body and mind, his heart torn by the death of the noble Isabella, abandoned defenseless to the perfidy of the King, delivered to poverty, to the disdain of Greatness, now finding himself more abandoned by men in Spain than Although he was not in the West Indies, his attachment to the Papacy has lost none of its strength and vigilance. From the depths of his misery, he made a supreme effort to safeguard the glory of the Pontificate. He knows that he is being shamefully deceived, and, despite his distress, finding a last loan to take out, he sends one of his brothers to Rome with a letter for the Holy Father. The case was well advanced, the Roman Court seemed already engaged. But Columbus writes, and his testimony prevails with His Holiness over all the hypocritical protests, the memoirs, the petitions, the dispatches of the Catholic King, of the Archbishop of Rosano and the verbal entreaties of the Spanish Ambassador. Three Bulls, already signed and sealed, are retained at the Pontifical Chancellery, on the simple advice of the Messenger of the Gospel.

IV

However, time is running out. The days of the Revealer of Creation are numbered. His sufferings increase, his strength diminishes; God will call his faithful servant back to himself. The time of reward is approaching.

Rome will not wait until subsequent explorations have taught it the full extent of the regions discovered, and the number of new populations that will be able to enter its bosom. It is not enough to have praised the virtues of the providential man. After having glorified his works by word, the Vicar of Christ will consecrate their unequaled greatness with an unparalleled monument.

Foreseeing the immense extension that Catholicism would take, Julius II did not continue the work of repair and reconstruction of Saint Peter's Basilica that had been undertaken by Popes Nicholas V and Paul II. The head of the Church conceived the idea of a temple proportionate to the increase that the kingdom of Jesus-Christ would receive. To this end, Julius II appealed to the architectural genius of all his contemporaries. A competition is open; the sketches flow in; numerous projects were submitted to His Holiness, who decidedly adopted the plan of the famous Bramante Lazzari, and ordered its execution to begin without the slightest delay.

Thirty-three days before the death of Christopher Columbus, on April 18, 1506, the Pope himself laid, with great solemnity, the first stone of the building.

Thus, the Revelator of the Globe was able to receive on his bed of sorrows this consoling news, that already the Church, assured of reaping the fruit of its labors, was erecting in honor of the Prince of the Apostles a temple capable of sufficient for generations, and to contain within its walls deputations from the entire Catholic universe.

At the same moment, an immense intellectual operation, a true scientific revolution, and a necessary complement to the Discovery, was being accomplished in Rome. The system of the World was found by Copernicus, although it was not published until later, and its author worked for nearly thirty years perfecting his famous work: De revolulionibus orbium coelestium.

We can say that thanks to Columbus, as Humboldt recognizes, a new meaning was suddenly revealed, the meaning of great things and the infinite.

Rome's admiration for Columbus survived the Messenger of the Gospel. His glory did not desert the Vatican. The successor of Pope Julius II inherited the feelings that the venerable servant of God inspired in this pontiff. It was almost

solemnly that, surrounded by the Princes of the Church, Pope Leo X had the story of the Discovery read to him, contained in the Oceanic Decades of Peter Martyr of Anghierra. Under the auspices of the same Pope, the first book was published which defended Columbus against the imputation of not having been the first discoverer of the New World.

It was in Rome that the first poetry was printed, composed by a bishop, in honor of the one who carried the Cross across the seas.

It was in Rome that a Genoese ambassador learned of the Holiness of his compatriot, already completely forgotten in his native city. And (we repeat it because of the importance of the fact) he did not fear to write before the eyes of the Sovereign Pontiff that "no one was ever comparable to him in merit in the Christian Church." Ac neutiquam comparabile in Christianam ecclesiam promeritum.

It was in Rome that several cardinals successively became advisors, often revisers, and sometimes patrons of the poets inspired by the greatness of Columbus.

It was in Rome that the learned Oratorian, Thomas Bozius, addressing Pope Gregory that the prophet Isaiah wanted to designate the man of Discovery under the name of the Dove, sign of the Good News.

It was in Rome that, after a delay of three centuries, the first Pope who saw the earth, due to the zeal of Christopher Columbus, ordered us to finally write the complete history of this great Servant of God.

It was in Rome that the first colossal statue of this hero erected by the New World was executed.

It was in Rome that the first steam press, established in the Propaganda bookstore, was named after Christopher Columbus.

It was in Rome that the most numerous orders for paintings and sculptures were made by Americans, representing various episodes of the Discovery; as if we felt that Rome, alone, must be the true homeland of the Messenger of the

Gospel, the guardian of his posthumous rights, and the guardian of his universal fame.

Let's stop our pen. Let's remove the details. A simple question can help.

In the entire history of the Pontificate, could we find a second example of such constant sympathies, and of such expressive testimonies given to a layman by the papacy?

Do these exceptional relationships between the successors of the Prince of the Apostles and the Ambassador of God have no significance?

V

If it is true that it is necessary, as the historiographer of the Spanish navy said, to violate one's conscience, to admit that the Discovery could be the work of chance or of human science, it is not less certain that one would have to stifle the voice of one's heart, and painfully repress one's reason, to believe that the demonstrator of Creation was not of the order of Saints.

SYNOPSIS

OF THE LIFE OF THE SERVANT OF GOD

FIRST CHAPTER

VOCATION OF THE SERVANT OF GOD

I

For fourteen hundred and ninety-two years the Redeemer had come to earth. His Gospel had been preached in Asia, in Europe, in several countries of Africa and on the islands of the sea. The seat of Catholic unity, fixed in Rome by the Prince of the Apostles, continued to spread its influences among men. benefactors.

However, far from the gaze of ancient nations, unbeknownst to scientists, sailors and geographers, beyond the waves of the Ocean, the sun illuminated, from the origin of the world, an unknown Continent extending from one at the other pole, an unnamed region within the very people who inhabited it, innumerable tribes,

infinitely divided by idioms, customs, hereditary hatreds, ignoring the extent and configuration of this land, contemptuous of peace, agriculture, indifferent to the magnificence of the soil which their struggles stained with blood.

There, on the plateaus of the mountainous regions where a sort of civilization had been established, an execrable despotism reigned. And yet, this despotism was less terrible than the cult; the cult less horrible than the priest, surrounded by mystery and fear, pot-bellied, voracious, hideous, with torn ears, bloody hair, feasting, he and his young, on the flesh of his compatriots. Fear and ignorance served as the basis of this religion. The sovereigns also wanted to be worshiped as well as a visible divinity.

In the savannahs, the pampas, the llanos, as well as in the boundless forests, warlike tribes celebrated their triumphs by torturing captives. Proud of their savage independence, showing genius only for the invention of torments, they took pleasure in idleness, hunting, and the extermination of weaker tribes. For them, perfected lying constituted political talent. The dissimulation carried in peace, in war, even in the frame of fire, was the supreme greatness. It seems that the prince of darkness held the entire extent of this continent inexorably bent under his tyranny; that he had made it his refuge. Reassured by a reign of several thousand years, he perhaps flattered himself of perpetuating his empire there. But the mercy of the Most High had looked upon this earth, and its hour had finally come.

II

The man whom God had chosen to abolish the reign of Satan, and to bring the sign of Redemption to this other part of the Globe, was born in Genoa, the superb, of a noble family, plunged into obscurity by reverses , and reduced to living by the work of his hands.

This child received from his father a figurative name of his future mission, recalling the good news, the message of salvation, the spirit of peace. The Church added another which meant “carrying Christ”. The weapons of his ancestors also seemed to symbolize his destination. There we saw three silver doves on an azure field, just as the three white sails of his first expedition were to appear one day on the sea. The ancient motto of his house consisted of three names, those of the three theological virtues, which were the motive and means of his enterprise.

The young Christopher Columbus barely acquired a few notions of arithmetic and Latin at the University of Pavia, where his friend had sent him, when the embarrassment of his parents forced him to abandon

books, and to come and share their handicrafts. It was during these monotonous labors that he felt the taste for maritime life dawn within him, a prelude to his vocation. At fourteen, he earned his living on a ship as a cabin boy.

After this tough apprenticeship, having crisscrossed the Mediterranean in all directions, approached Africa and Asia, fought Muslims and corsairs in many encounters, he reached the rank of officer, and later obtained a command.

Although mystery surrounds his origin, as befits all greatness, two circumstances of his youth are positively known. — He was injured in an attack against the Mohammedans; — he sailed in the waters of the Levant, on the celes of Egypt and Syria.

His twentieth year was approaching, when the capture of Constantinople spread terror throughout Christendom. Muslim fanaticism, exalted by this triumph, made Palestine unapproachable and threatened to annihilate the Holy Places. It was then that he had the opportunity to admire the Franciscans, these intrepid guardians of the Holy Sepulchre, temporarily taking refuge in the coastal ports. He loved their courage, their rule, their clothing, associating himself with their desire and their hopes. Deprived of the happiness of adoring the tomb of Christ, he resolved to one day wrest it from the hands of infidels and make free access to it for all Christian peoples. This hope engendered by

his faith, nourished by his charity in the secret of his soul, was from then on the subject
of his meditations, the foundation of his strength, the stimulus of his nautical observations, the cause of his plan of discoveries, and the final goal of his aspirations in this world.

The ardor of the crusades inflamed his heart. It was animated by this pious desire that the valiant Christian attached himself to the Savior, loved him with an inextinguishable love, made himself with complete abandonment the servant of the Divine Master, and aspired to be the messenger of his Church.

CHAPTER TWO

NOVITIATE OF THE SERVANT OF GOD

I

Christopher Columbus, expanding his navigations, crossed the Strait of Gibraltar, and, doubling the coasts of Spain, was near Portugal when the fire of his ship forced him to rush into the waves. Although he was a skilled swimmer, at the distance we were from the shore, he would infallibly have perished if Providence had not pushed near him one of those long oars by means of which crews move

ships surprised by the calm ones. With this help he was able to reach the land; and from there, thanks to Christian charity, reach the port of Lisbon.

So, thrown into a foreign country, Christopher Columbus found himself without resources, without support, without credit; but God was watching over him. He soon received the reward of his faith. His attendance at the services earned him the attention of the noble daughter of a sailor, former governor of the island of Porto Santo. Love removed the obstacle of his poverty; and he allied himself, by this honorable union, with two families of navigators favorably admitted to the court.

This marriage, by bringing to Columbus the joys of the heart, the means of increasing his knowledge, did not assure him ease. He remained in relative difficulty, being obliged, to support his house, to copy books, draw spheres and nautical charts. In the midst of these daily toils, a question continually rose before him: — How can we achieve the redemption or conquest of the Holy Tomb? — To obtain the treasures that the greed of the Muslims would require, he turned his eyes towards the unknown regions of the Globe which he supposed to be located to the south and to the west beyond the Atlantic.

This idea, at first vague and imperfectly formed in his mind, gradually took on serious substance. What had appeared to him confusedly in the darkness of the mind, became, under the influence of Grace, clear, precise, luminous and, finally, tangible evidence. Columbus never credited his own genius or God's gifts for his plan. Towards the end of his life, before leaving for his last mission, he admitted that after he had sailed, studied everything that had been written by historians, philosophers, scientists on cosmography, nautical sciences and the other arts, Our Lord opened his understanding in a palpable way, and opened his will. (1)

(1) Our Lord opened my understanding with a palpable hand, that it was feasible to sail from here to the Indies, and He did not open the will to the conclusion of this. "Lettre de l'Amiral au Rôi el à la Reine: Libro de las prophecies, fol. iv. Colecc. diplom., vol. II, p. 262.

He then saw distinctly that one could, by continuing to sail straight towards the west, reach countries containing gold, riches of all kinds; and he thought, with these treasures, he would be able to redeem the Holy Sepulcher or, if necessary, conquer it.

We have always misunderstood the inner thoughts and the true goal of Christopher Columbus, when we believed that he was simply seeking to discover a New World. Discovery was never a goal for him; but only a means of securing the resources necessary for the redemption or conquest of the Holy Sepulchre.

His plan being now immovably settled in his mind; he calculated the probable expenses of such an expedition, and, having fixed the figure, he had to set conditions which would enable him to achieve it. From this moment, these conditions being regulated like his plan, the connectivity of the two respective projects of Discovery and deliverance are united by a necessary solidarity. As he does not want to make a Discovery for the pure pleasure of discovering, he will not set out to sea if we do not accept the conditions which will one day allow him to deliver the Holy Sepulchre. For to discover the unknown lands is his labor; freeing the Holy Sepulchre, his reward.

Now, having fixed his conditions, according to his most rational calculations, he no longer considers himself in charge of changing anything. He has no use for titles, honors, privileges, endowments, income. All this is nothing in his eyes if he cannot, after having carried the Cross among unknown peoples, open for them free access to the tomb of the Savior. This immutable resolution never to undertake his discoveries, if these discoveries did not subsequently allow him to free the Holy Sepulchre, was the direct and sole cause of the mortal delays, the painful trials and the inexpressible suffering that he had to endure before to be able to give Jesus Christ the New World.

His veneration of the Holy Places cost him eighteen years of effort, patience, humiliation, embarrassment, deprivation, and struggles against the disdain of science and the distrust of the courts.

As soon as he reached his fortieth year, he left for Genoa, first wanting to associate his homeland with the honor of his enterprise, and proposed it to the Council of the Republic. But no one is a prophet among his own people; his offer was treated as a reverie. Repulsed by Genoa, and wanting to benefit Italy from his discovery, he headed for Venice. There, an absolute refusal alone responded to his proposal. Without being discouraged, the man of Providence continued to sail, to extend his investigations of nature. He crossed the Germanic Ocean, entered the seas of the North, and, in February 1477, was a hundred leagues beyond Iceland.

Returning to Lisbon, he resumed his life of labor, until the moment when King Joam II, nicknamed the Perfect, ascended the throne of Portugal. A distinguished mind, versed in the sciences and a fine connoisseur of merit, Joam II grouped around him the most famous sailors of his time. The grandeur of Columbus' ideas dazzled him, and he distrusted them. This discovery project seemed too gigantic to him to be practicable. But, following new discussions, the King resolved to risk

the costs of the enterprise. However, he first wanted to know what remuneration the Genoese would require in the event of success.

Columbus set his conditions.

They seemed so exorbitant that the Court was outraged. He was offered extraordinary honors, possessions and privileges. But, as all these advantages would not, after the Discovery, have assured him the means to deliver the Holy Sepulchre, he rejected them, sticking to his request, from which he could take nothing away.

However, the King, convinced of the possibility of this Discovery, and very upset at not being able to undertake it, appeared sad and dreamy. To calm his displeasure, a minister suggested a way to satisfy himself, without having to submit to the extravagant pretensions of this stranger. The loyalty of Joarn II was surprised, and he stooped to real roguery. Columbus was invited to present in writing the theoretical ideas of his plan, attaching supporting documents, notes, reasoning, world maps and a map of the route, so that a scientific commission could judge the merit of his project.
Unable to suspect deception in such high places, Columbus delivered his papers and plans. A copy was immediately taken, and, while he was lured with vain negotiations, the most able captain of the Portuguese navy, armed with all these indications, set out secretly to carry out the enterprise.

After a fairly long navigation in the West, terror struck people's minds; and the ship returned shamefully to port. Although we had calculated everything for success, chosen the best ship, the best crew, and possessed in duplicate all the scientific and nautical value of Columbus, his reasonings, his drawings, his plan, his maps, we could not did not have his person; success was therefore impossible.

However Joam II persisted in his desire. As if he had understood that the result depended on Columbus himself, the King resumed negotiations with him. Smoothing out the difficulties, he now accepted all the conditions which had so greatly disturbed the royal majesty. The opportunity was very tempting; for, during this interval, Columbus had the misfortune of losing his companion. Destitution worsened in his lonely home, and he had to provide for his young child. By acceding to the King's offers, he could, in a few months perhaps, find himself above the first lords of the Court. But, having learned of the breach of trust of which Joam II had been guilty, he refused to listen to any proposal, not wanting to associate deception and disloyalty with the honor of carrying the Gospel beyond the seas. He therefore continued, to earn his living, to copy books and draw up maps, until the moment when, having to fear the anger of the Monarch, who was irritated by his unwavering resistance, he secretly fled from Lisbon with his poor child.

III

Columbus returned to Genoa.

Without being put off by a first refusal, his civic zeal made him submit his proposal to the Senate again. But Genoa, blind to its interests, and deaf to this patriotic call of genius, persisted in its disbelief. It was not for Italy that God intended the honor of discovering a New World; he had done enough for her by drawing from her bosom the agent of his Providence.

At this time, the eyes of Christian Europe were turned towards Spain, whose unity was achieved by Queen Isabella by the union of the three crowns of Castile, Leon and Aragon, to which the emirate would be added. from Granada. This admirable sovereign, who reformed morals, justice, finances, protected letters, increased the number of printing presses, had resolved to expel the followers of Mohammed from her States. His concern for the tomb of the Savior was great. She assisted the Franciscans, her faithful guardians, and, each year, embroidered with her hands a magnificent work for the altar of the Holy Sepulcher. In memory of the Passion, every Friday she opened the doors of her palace, received in person the complaints of the most humble and summarily administered justice.

Whether it was by the effect of this sympathy for the Holy Places, or by the direct impulse of Grace, Christopher Columbus felt drawn towards Spain (with a compelling love!), according to his expression Referring to God, he left, although without support, without recommendation, without money and without presentable clothes. His arrival in this country was no less strange than his forced landing in Portugal, where he was to improve his nautical skills. There, he was brought by force majeure, sea disaster. Here > on the contrary, it was of his own choice, with his considered will that he came, despite his destitution and his ignorance of the language, to offer himself to the The proudest and most magnificent court of this era.

In all of Spain, only one man was then capable of understanding his views, of associating himself with them. But this man, of whom he had never heard, lived separated from the world in a rustic Franciscan hut, called Santa Maria de la Rabida, located far from the main roads; and it was precisely at the door of his residence that the Ambassador of God first arrived!

CHAPTER THREE

PROBATION OF THE SERVANT OF GOD